

Dialogues and Debates from
Late Antiquity to Late
Byzantium

Edited by
Averil Cameron and Niels Gaul

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Dialogues and Debates from Late Antiquity to Late Byzantium offers the first overall discussion of the literary and philosophical dialogue tradition in Greek from imperial Rome to the end of the Byzantine empire and beyond. Sixteen case studies combine theoretical approaches with in-depth analysis and include comparisons with the neighbouring Syriac, Georgian, Armenian and Latin traditions. Following an introduction and a discussion of Plutarch as a writer of dialogues, other chapters consider the *Erosthophus*, a philosophical dialogue in Syriac, John Chrysostom's *On Priesthood*, issues of literariness and complexity in the Greek *Adversus Iudaeos* dialogues, the *Trophies of Damascus*, Maximus Confessor's *Liber Asceticus* and the middle Byzantine apocryphal revelation dialogues. The volume demonstrates a new frequency in middle and late Byzantium of rhetorical, theological and literary dialogues, concomitant with the increasing rhetoricisation of Byzantine literature, and argues for a move towards new and exciting experiments. Individual chapters examine the Platonising and anti-Latin dialogues written in the context of Anselm of Havelberg's visits to Constantinople, the theological dialogue by Soterichos Panteugenos, the dialogues of Niketas 'of Maroneia' and the literary dialogues by Theodore Prodromos, all from the twelfth century. The final chapters explore dialogues from the empire's Georgian periphery and discuss late Byzantine philosophical, satirical and verse dialogues by Nikephoros Gregoras, Manuel II Palaiologos and George Scholarios, with special attention to issues of form, dramatisation and performance.

Averil Cameron was Warden of Keble College Oxford from 1994 to 2010 and formerly Professor of Late Antique and Byzantine Studies at King's College London, UK. She is currently the chair of the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research. Her most recent books are *Byzantine Matters* (2014), *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity* (2014) and *Arguing It Out. Discussion in Twelfth-Century Byzantium* (2016).

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First published 2017
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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individual chapters, the contributors

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-4724-8935-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-26944-3 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Apex CoVantage, LLC

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Acknowledgements

This volume is based on papers originally presented at a conference entitled ‘... But How Shall We Converse?’ Dialogues and Debates from Late Antiquity to Late Byzantium’ and convened at Keble College, Oxford, in July 2014; the conference was co-sponsored by Central European University Budapest.

We owe our heartfelt thanks to many people and institutions without whose help neither the original conference nor this volume would have been possible. With regard to the conference, they include at Keble College, Oxford, Tracey Sowerby, Tom Higham and the Medieval Studies Cluster, Trish Long, Yuriria Silva-Velasquez, Melissa Ferreira and Nicholas French. Elodie Turquois and Jeannie Sellick were also invaluable helpers. At the Central European University, Budapest, we are very grateful to Volker Menze, Cristian Daniel and the Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies. We thank our co-organisers of the conference, Florin Leonte, Divna Manolova, Alberto Rigolio and Foteini Spingou, the latter two of whom were also wonderful research assistants to Averil Cameron in the context of her Leverhulme Emeritus Fellowship on late antique and Byzantine dialogues in 2011–2013.

We are also very grateful for the financial assistance of the Jowett Fund and the Oxford Centre for Byzantine Research, and the generous collaboration offered by Ioannis Papadogiannakis in the context of his ERC project ‘Defining Belief and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Role of Interreligious Debate and Interaction’ (DEBIDEM).

Last but not least, with regard to the present volume, we owe huge thanks for efficient assistance with the bibliography to Ivan Marić (Edinburgh), and for financial support to the Department of Classics at the University of Edinburgh.

Averil Cameron
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Introduction

Averil Cameron and Niels Gaul

NEOPHRON: But how shall we converse? For it is above all and in all cases necessary to struggle about the method, and define it, isn't it? [. . .] But the 'now then, he said' and such things, I don't know how it will be fitting to say this here. Shall we force ourselves then, as it were, in order to give a touch of Platonic freshness to our discourse? For it is not at all necessary that our conversation be abundant and drawn out.

PALAITIMOS: By no means! That shall be absent!

NEOPHRON: But will it suffice, to your mind, to polish everything to accord with the Lucianic dialogues?

PALAITIMOS: Away with that! For considerable want of elegance comes to mind thinking of him, although at places he does prove sound.

NEOPHRON: And how will someone find this dialogue worthy of praise if not able to either attribute it to Plato, or refer it to Lucian? For it will be necessary to make notes of it somehow; next many will copy it for themselves.¹

This literary exchange demonstrates the continuing importance of the dialogic genre, and indeed a considerable awareness of generic subtleties, at the very end of the 'Byzantine millennium'. Literary and philosophical dialogues were in fact one of the most enduring and most often practised forms of writing both in antiquity and throughout the Byzantine period. Yet the hundreds of examples known from the early Christian period and continuing in Byzantium until as late as 1453 and beyond have rarely received the attention they deserve. If Byzantine literature was the 'Cinderella' of Byzantine studies,² dialogues remain the Cinderella of Byzantine literary history.

Our definition of 'dialogue' is deliberately broad. It needs to be, in order to reflect the wide range of actual types. We understand by the term dialogue a literary composition presenting a conversation between two or more speakers, dealing with a particular theme or range of themes. Such compositions may be more or less literary, in the sense of the characterisation of the speakers, the setting of the conversation and the extent to which they draw on Platonic or other models. Some are much closer to the question-and-answer literature that is the subject of two recent edited volumes;³ these are often, though not always, more pedagogic in character.

Some dialogues give their interlocutors suitable names and some characterisation, while others may identify them only as Orthodox and heterodox, Christian and Jew, or Latin and Greek. Many deal with theological or philosophical questions, but others again deal with more literary topics and echo Lucian rather than Plato. There can be no one-size-fits-all definition or descriptions of the several hundred dialogues that survive or are known in Greek and Syriac from the second century CE to 1453 and later; in addition to these, a total count would include the Latin dialogues of Cicero and later authors, including those by Augustine, dozens of Latin scholastic disputations and dialogues from the mediaeval period, and many more from the Renaissance in Latin, Italian and other languages.⁴ The genre also includes dialogues between body and soul popular in many ancient and mediaeval cultures,⁵ and the many dialogues written by Christians to argue against Jews (the so-called *Adversus Iudaeos* texts)⁶ or Muslims in Greek, Syriac and Christian Arabic. As is evident, dialogue flourished in many languages and literatures, including Georgian, as Aleksidze's contribution demonstrates.

While there have been some general contributions on dialogue in the early Christian and late antique part of the millennium under consideration, there is still no overall study of the Greek material, in particular for the Byzantine period proper.⁷ The latter is entirely omitted, for example, in Vittorio Hösle's *Der philosophische Dialog. Eine Poetik und Hermeneutik* (2006),⁸ the only publication to date that aims to trace the history of dialogues from antiquity to the Renaissance and later; Hösle's emphasis is on the philosophical, as his title suggests, but also on the history of dialogue in the west. It is exactly this gap that the present volume aims to fill for the first time by including papers covering the huge range of surviving dialogues from late antiquity to Byzantium, from the second to the fifteenth centuries CE. In view of this overall neglect, even given the growing attention being paid to literary issues in Byzantium,⁹ we focus here mainly on dialogues written in Greek, and of course we can make no claim to completeness, or even to covering all periods within this range.¹⁰ The dialogues in Syriac and Christian Arabic have been more often studied, though admittedly often with a focus on finding evidence of ecumenical or interfaith dialogue in the modern sense, and their numbers are even greater. A welcome volume has recently appeared dealing with post-classical dialogues,¹¹ even if more still needs to be done to compare the early Christian dialogues with others from the early Imperial period and with the literature of the Second Sophistic. However, the need is at its most acute in relation to later centuries: not only are the Byzantine dialogues neglected as a group; many of them remain without modern studies or critical editions, and in some cases still remain unpublished.¹² The present volume includes several contributions that present the first critical analysis of an individual dialogue. While the volume can only mark a first step, we hope it will have the effect of stimulating many more such studies.

As Alessandra Bucossi points out in her contribution below, the proem to the six dialogues on the procession of the Holy Spirit by the mysterious twelfth-century writer, Niketas 'of Maroneia', explains the advantages of the dialogue form: it 'suits the subtle argument of enquiries that require a particularly accurate

examination, is above all fitting for the close scrutiny of ecclesiastical dogmas, and is useful and necessary for the discovery of the truth for those who do not want to quarrel; wherefore also some of the greatest teachers used this form of discourse'.¹³ Niketas's justification may be disingenuous, but it points to one of the most fundamental questions about such dialogues, and about the dialogic, namely how far they are a genuine means of hearing differing voice and expressing different points of view and how far they act as vehicles and strategies for competition. Again, there is no single answer, and many more individual examples first need to be explored. However, these dialogues also raise many other questions in relation to their rhetorical and performative strategies and their literary, philosophical and theological content. What do they reveal, for example, about the continuing influence of Plato? Unlike the logical works of Aristotle and despite some famous examples of Byzantine Platonists (or rather, Neo-Platonists), who indeed found difficulty in accommodating their philosophical tastes within the prevailing religious climate, Plato's dialogues had a more limited role in the Byzantine educational system. The latter remained weighted towards rhetoric, with Aristotle's logical works as one of its main platforms. This makes it all the more surprising that 'Platonic' dialogue continued at all, in however attenuated a literary form, an issue addressed in several contributions below. Eustratios of Nicaea, for example, who cast his defence of the actions of Alexios I Komnenos on church treasures in the form of a Platonising dialogue,¹⁴ was also a notable Aristotelian scholar and commentator on the *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is worth noting, therefore, that in the later Byzantine dialogues, Platonising features tend to be found in the opening scene-setting, while the range of Platonic dialogues echoed is somewhat limited, suggesting that Platonising elements were more a matter of style than of philosophical adherence. At this stage in the research, it seems better therefore to take an inclusive approach. Nevertheless, especially with the increasing inclusion of syllogisms as well as citations of proof texts, the later Byzantine dialogues raise some interesting questions about philosophical awareness and about contemporary understandings of dialectic. This becomes particularly salient in relation to the development of disputation in the Latin West, and in the context of the numerous debates between Latins and Greeks on theological issues, during which the Byzantines were confronted with the claims of Latin disputants to be relying on reason rather than tradition. Alex Novikoff's contribution below acts as a foil to the eastern emphasis in the rest of the papers by setting out the intellectual developments taking place in the West from the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The issues raised include a further range of questions about the so-far neglected role of dialogues in the religious, political and cultural fields. Why, for instance, asks Foteini Spingou, did Soterichos Panteugenos, also in the twelfth century, choose to cast his theological views, which led to sanctions being taken against him, in the form of a Platonic dialogue? Both he and Eustratios of Nicaea circulated their dialogues on controversial theological issues among the elite, not merely within ecclesiastical circles, and evidently found an eager audience. An important question represented here by the papers by Peter Van Nuffelen and Patrick Andrist is that of the relation of the anti-Jewish dialogues to, in current

perception, more 'mainstream' literary production in Greek and Syriac. While the *Adversus Iudaeos* texts and the Christian-Muslim dialogues have usually been treated as discrete genres, they also belong in the wider textual milieu in which dialogues were a common mode of expression.¹⁵ Much of the specialised scholarship on both groups has been motivated by the search for evidence of real Christian-Jewish and Christian-Muslim debates; this is not the approach taken here, and indeed it can obscure actual similarities with other kinds of dialogic texts.

Some Byzantine theological dialogues, including some dialogues with the Latins, claim to be verbatim reports of actual debates, and such public disputations certainly happened, even if the textual record in particular instances is clearly more literary. Such were the accounts of the debates in which Anselm of Havelberg took part in Constantinople and Thessalonike in 1136 and 1154; we have his own highly partial version of the first, in Latin, and the Greek version of the second, not surprisingly with differing emphases.¹⁶ Public debates could also be a feature of late antique contexts, from Augustine's debates with Manichaeans to the staged debates of the sixth century East.¹⁷ In relation to the surviving texts, we should think in terms of a broad spectrum that could include the spoken, the verbatim written record and the literary, with the latter encompassing a wide spectrum of its own. Placing individual texts on this spectrum is one of the current desiderata, and a task that occupies many of the contributions here. Equally, given the vast array of dialogic literature from the early Christian and late antique periods to the end of Byzantium, it seems simplistic to associate an 'end of dialogue' with the rise of Christianity or to consider dialogues written by Christians as by definition 'closed'.¹⁸ The latter idea is closely connected with the alleged rise of intolerance in Christian late antiquity, and whether or not that claim is justified, such a black-and-white division between 'open' and 'closed' (Christian) dialogues is inadequate to do justice to the complexities of religious culture in the centuries that followed.¹⁹ Religious competition between pagans, heterodox Christians, Jews and, later, Muslims, and the nature of religious change in the period from late antiquity to Islam, are equally current topics. Only by close readings of individual examples and a full assessment of the huge amount of material taken as a whole can one hope to explore the actual 'dialogic' features of dialogues composed in the Christian empire. This is a task to which we hope the present volume will contribute, as it does not confine itself to specifically religious or theological dialogues and ranges over a much wider chronological period. Drawing too sharp a distinction between late antiquity and Byzantium can be equally deceptive, if not actually distorting. Finally, casting the net more widely also helps to overcome conventional boundaries between theological and secular texts, and to allow the more flexible and integrated approach to Byzantine literature and culture that is badly needed.

The late antique and mediaeval religious and philosophical dialogues are commonly considered heirs to the earlier philosophical tradition, although their specific relationship with it often remains to be explored. Such dialogues could take many different forms, as shown by Alberto Quiroga Puertas's paper on John Chrysostom's dialogue on priesthood and Alberto Rigolio's paper on a Syriac

dialogue with Socrates as a speaker. But it was not only the philosophical dialogues that provided models: Péter Tóth demonstrates how the Byzantines also appropriated and adapted the earlier tradition of apocryphal revelation dialogues. The late antique philosophical dialogues were of course themselves drawing on a long tradition in the early empire and earlier.

Plutarch was among the writers of the imperial period read in Byzantium, and Eleni Kechagia-Ovseiko's paper reminds us that he wrote dialogues with philosophical content, and was part of the Second Sophistic movement also beloved of Byzantine high-style writers. Twelfth-century Byzantium also witnessed the rebirth of the Lucianic, or so-called satirical dialogue, a phenomenon that still needs better analysis in the context of the contemporary reappearances of both allegory and the novel, and that needs to be integrated into the lively scholarship currently being directed to Byzantine literature in the period.²⁰ In this connection, whereas the anonymous *Timarion* has attracted considerable attention, Eric Cullhed's paper deals with one of the several literary dialogues composed by Theodore Prodromos, one of the most prominent contemporary intellectuals and literary figures, that have not received so much scholarly interest.²¹ Equally unresearched so far, but emerging from several contributions here, is the question of the performance of these dialogues in the so-called rhetorical *theatra* and other public or semi-public spaces.²² Dialogic elements, or 'embedded dialogues', also feature in other rhetorical genres, especially hagiography, and seem increasingly popular in the later Byzantine centuries in genres such as historiography, homiletic, oratory, epistolography and romances.²³ These issues are becoming more prominent as the politically productive role of rhetoric written in an archaising sociolect that has recently been fundamentally reevaluated in relation to imperial Roman culture is also being rethought in the case of the middle and later Byzantine periods.²⁴ Literary, philosophical and theological dialogues were as much a feature of the intellectual and literary production of the Palaiologan period as they were under the Komnenoi, and these are represented below by the papers of Florin Leonte, Divna Manolova and Niels Gaul,²⁵ while George Karamanolis demonstrates the continuing importance of the dialogue form in Greek even after 1453. In both the Komnenian and the Palaiologan periods, as also earlier, the nature of the educational system and the preponderance of rhetoric within it were important factors in determining the nature of literary production, and some of the dialogues considered below reveal the current issues and tensions that arose from such a context. The philosophical, theological and literary histories of Byzantium are all complex, and each is currently the subject of some radical rethinking; however, they still need to be brought together in an integrated way, an endeavour in which dialogues can and should play a significant part.

Many of the exciting approaches which have opened up in the study of ancient – or Renaissance, for that matter – dialogues in recent years have not yet been tried with regard to late antique and Byzantine dialogues;²⁶ concepts from literary theory such as (Bakhtinian) dialogism or polyphony could also be usefully explored,²⁷ as well as the issues of intertextuality prominent in other literary studies on Byzantium. We hope that the papers in this volume will enable such

questions to be asked, and open up this huge and varied literary field in productive ways.

Notes

- 1 George Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:11.23–12.8:

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· ἀλλὰ πῶς ἂν καὶ διαλεχθῇμεν; δεῖ γὰρ ἐπὶ πάντων περὶ τοῦ τρόπου
πρῶτον ζητεῖν καὶ τοῦτον ὀρίζειν· ἢ γάρ; [. . .] ἀλλὰ τὸ ‘φέρε ἢ δ’
ὅς’ καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα – οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἐνταῦθα λέγειν ἀρμόσει. ἀλλ’ ὥς
οἶόν τε βιασόμεθα, ὥς ἂν τι τῆς πλατωνικῆς εὐχροίας δῶμεν τῷ
λόγῳ· οὐ γὰρ δεῖ παντάπασιν τὸν γε ἡμέτερον λόγον χυδαῖον εἶναι
καὶ κατασεσυρμένον.

ΠΑΛΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· μηδαμῶς· ἀπέστω καὶ ταῦτα.

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· ἀλλ’ ἀρέσκει σοι πρὸς τοὺς Λουκιανοὺς διαλόγους ἅπαντα ἀπεξέσθαι ἄν;
ΠΑΛΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· χαίρῃ· πολὺ τι γὰρ κάκεινῳ τῆς τοιαύτης ἀπειροκαλίας
ἐγκαταμέμνηται, καίτοι γ’ ἔστιν οὗ σωφρονοῦντι.

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· καὶ πῶς τις λοιπὸν ἐπαινέσεται τὸν διάλογον τουτονί, μήτε Πλάτωνι
προστιθέναι, μήτ’ εἰς Λουκιανὸν ἀναφέρειν δυνάμενος; δεήσει γὰρ
ταῦτα καὶ ἀποσημειοῦσθαι πού, εἴτα ἐκγράψονται γε πολλοί;

our trans. Also quoted and translated by Karamanolis below and cited by Hoffmann, ‘Wie sieht wohl die Hölle aus?’, 209.

- 2 So famously Mullett, ‘Dancing with Deconstructionists’, 261.
- 3 Volgers and Zamagni, *Erotapokriseis*; Bussièrès, *Littérature des questions*.
- 4 See Schmidt, ‘Typologie und Literarisierung’; Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*; Novikoff, *Medieval Culture of Disputation*; Binkley, ‘Debates and Dialogues’, also drawing attention to Carolingian dialogues; Cardelle de Hartmann, *Lateinische Dialoge*; Heitsch and Vallée, *Printed Voices*; Cox, *Renaissance Dialogue*.
- 5 For the ancient Mesopotamian dialogue tradition, see Reinink and Vanstiphout, *Dispute Poems and Dialogues*.
- 6 Schreckenbergh, *Adversus-Iudaeos-Texte*; Külzer, *Disputationes Graecae contra Iudaeos*; Frederiksen and Irshai, ‘Christian Anti-Judaism’; Déroche, ‘La polémique anti-judaïque’; idem, ‘Forms and Functions’.
- 7 An exception is Bio, ‘Dialogo nella letteratura bizantina’. Early Christian and late antique dialogues: Schmidt and Cameron (n. 4 above); Voss, *Dialog in der Frühchristlichen Literatur*; Hoffmann, *Dialog bei den christlichen Schriftstellern*.
- 8 Höhle, *Philosophical Dialogue*. Coppola, Fernicola and Pappalardo, *Dialogus* (not seen but cited thanks to Alberto Rigolio) is limited to inter-religious dialogue and jumps from late antiquity, with three papers, and one on Christian Arabic to Peter Damian and Gilbert Crispin in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.
- 9 For which, see Cameron, *Arguing It Out*, chapter 1.
- 10 The preponderance of contributions dealing with the Middle and later Byzantine periods can be explained by the contemporary rise in literary production in those centuries, but even if fewer dialogues survive from the seventh to ninth centuries, their composition did die out completely.
- 11 Dubel and Gotteland, *Formes et genres*; Andrieu, *Dialogue antique*, is useful but is more concerned with dramatic dialogues.
- 12 This is a theme in Cameron, *Arguing It Out*; for examples, see Pasiourtidès, ‘Theological Encounters’; Blanchet, *Théodore Agallianos*.
- 13 Below, 129.

- 14 Cameron, *Arguing It Out*, 15–19.
- 15 See Cameron, *Arguing It Out* for such an argument.
- 16 On Anselm's account, see Novikoff's chapter below.
- 17 Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*.
- 18 Provocatively, Goldhill in his introduction to *End of Dialogue*, following Lim, *Public Disputation*.
- 19 Athanassiadi, *Vers la pensée unique*; see Van Nuffelen, 'End of Open Competition?'; Cameron and Hoyland, *Doctrine and Debate*.
- 20 Recent readings proffered by Kaldellis, 'Timarion: Toward a Literary Interpretation' and idem, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 276–83.
- 21 But see recently Marciniak, 'Theodore Prodromos' *Bion praxis*'; Migliorini, 'Teodoro Prodromo, *Amarant*'; idem, *Scritti satirici*.
- 22 See, for example, Gaul, 'Performative Reading'.
- 23 For example, Agapitos, 'Ἀφηγηματικὴ σημασία'.
- 24 For the second sophistic, see, for example, Schmitz, *Bildung und Macht*; Whitmarsh, *Second Sophistic*; idem, *Beyond the Second Sophistic*. In Byzantine studies, the register of high-brow rhetoric is increasingly understood as a purposely fostered politically relevant sociolect, rather than the proverbial 'ivory tower'.
- 25 See also Leonte, 'Advice and Praise for the Ruler'.
- 26 See, for instance, Halperin, 'Plato and the Erotics of Narrativity'; Zappen, *Rebirth of Dialogue*.
- 27 Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 181–269; see recently Jacobs, 'Dialogical Differences'.

Source

Gennadios Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, edited by Martin Jugie, Louis Petit and Xénophon A. Sidéridès, *Oeuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*. Vol. 3:1–21. Paris: Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1930.

1 Plutarch's dialogues

Beyond the Platonic example?

*Eleni Kechagia-Ovseiko**

Plutarch embraced dialogue. Beyond the use of dialogue – taken in the literal sense of ‘conversation, verbal exchange’ (*OED*, s.v.) – as a rhetorical gambit that enlivens the narrative of his *Lives* and lends voice to his *Moral Essays*, Plutarch most importantly adopted the dialogue as a literary genre and produced a number of philosophical works set in the dialogue form. In fact, after Plato, who is hailed as the real inventor of the dialogue as a literary form,¹ Plutarch is the next main surviving representative of the genre in ancient Greek literature, although this is partly owing to the vagaries of textual transmission: there were many other Greek authors who produced dialogues (most notably, Aristotle and his Peripatetic successors), but these are unfortunately no longer extant.² Be that as it may, the fact remains that Plutarch stands between the master of the genre, Plato, and the Christian authors, who continued to cultivate the dialogue within the framework of theological, philosophical or political debates.³ Plutarch's dialogues are, therefore, an inevitable bridge between the Platonic and the Christian tradition of dialogue, and as such can throw light on the development of the genre beyond antiquity.⁴

The importance of Plutarch for the history of the dialogue as a literary genre is not just a matter of chronology and transmission. Most crucially, Plutarch's selection of the dialogue as a literary form for many of his philosophical works undoubtedly reflects his allegiance to Plato and his philosophy. In Plutarch, we have a conscious engagement with, if not emulation of, the Platonic dialogues, and so through Plutarch we can see how far and in what ways Plato's exemplum of dialogue writing was transplanted to the intellectual setting of the Greco-Roman world and thereafter.⁵ In other words, Plutarch's dialogues do matter because they can be seen as the prism through which Plato's model of dialogue is diffused in late antiquity, Christianity and beyond.⁶

With this in mind, what I hope to do in the present paper is offer an overview of Plutarch's dialogues in an attempt to set the foundations for exploring the question: how far is Plutarch's use of the dialogue form only a ‘Platonesque’ literary ploy or an instrument for genuine philosophical investigation, replicating the Platonic model of philosophising through dialogue? This is not an easy question to answer, not least because there is no unified interpretation of what exactly the dialogue form was meant to be ‘doing’ in Plato. As has been argued by Plato experts,⁷ the Platonic dialogues are too varied in form to admit of a singular account of their aim and

purpose (which could then be compared with that of Plutarch's dialogues). However, one feature that characterises most of Plato's dialogues and that can be taken as an effect of the dialogic form is the elusiveness of the philosophical outcome: the reader is more often than not left wondering about the philosophical lessons to be learned from the dialogue, and about what Plato's own philosophical views were.⁸ The philosophical debate we are witnessing in the Platonic dialogues is frequently open ended, the result being a tension, as Simon Goldhill put it, 'between the drive towards ideal, normative, authoritative knowledge and the slipperiness and playfulness of dialogue as a means of expression'.⁹

Does the seemingly open-ended nature of Platonic dialogue seep through to Plutarch? In what follows, I will attempt to explore further the issue of open-endedness and its philosophical meaning by taking a broad-brush look at Plutarch's extant dialogues and discussing the selection of topics and narrative techniques that Plutarch employs in them.

Themes in Plutarch's dialogues

Let me start with some numbers: Plutarch's extant corpus of philosophical works, collectively (and rather misleadingly) known as *Moralia*, is made up of seventy-eight texts of varying length, format and subject matter. My count here is simply based on the conventional list of the *Moralia* in modern editions, following Stephanus's edition of 1572.¹⁰ Sixteen of these, that is, one fifth of the corpus, can be classified as dialogues of one sort or other; the rest of the texts take other literary forms, such as treatise (e.g. *De Virtute Morali*, *De Garrulitate*), declamation (e.g. *De Fortuna Romanorum*, *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna*, *De Gloria Atheniensium*) or letter (e.g. *De Tranquillitate Animi*, *De Capienda ex Inimicis Utilitate*), *zetemata* (e.g. *Quaestiones Naturales*).¹¹ The number of extant Plutarchan dialogues is not terribly meaningful in itself, especially considering that, according to the so-called Lamprias catalogue, Plutarch appears to have written many other philosophical works, which are lost today and of which some may well have been in dialogue form. However, what this number suggests is that, unlike Plato, Plutarch had presumably consciously chosen to set *only some* of his philosophical works in the dialogue form. To unravel the authorial intention behind Plutarch's choice of genre for particular texts is a rather tricky task – especially for an ancient author whose work we know only in part. But we can at least start making some sense of Plutarch's use of the dialogue form by looking firstly at the main topics or themes that Plutarch discusses in his dialogues: how, if at all, do these differ from the subject matter of the rest of the *Moralia*? And what does the dialogue form add, if anything, to the philosophical content?

In most cases, the Plutarchan dialogues are multi-dimensional: it is usually not difficult to pinpoint a central theme in the discussion, which is, of course, reflected in the title. But there are often other 'satellite' questions raised by the interlocutors, which may or may not always connect in an obvious way with the central theme. For example, in the *De Defectu Oraculorum*, the discussion gets under way with the interlocutors talking about the observation by Egyptian priests that

the year is getting shorter (410B–411D); the main subject of the dialogue, namely the reason for the disappearance of oracles, is taken up at 411E. Similarly, in the *De Pythiae Oraculis*, the discussion starts with the interlocutors raising the question of the colour of Corinthian bronze (395B–396C), before turning to the issue of the oracles at 396D. As the dialogue progresses, the discussion wanders off the main topic – the cessation of delivering oracles in verse – as the interlocutors walk through the statues and votive offerings at Delphi and talk, among other things, about the Sun and its relation to Apollo (400A–D). In part, this can be seen as a technique that lends verisimilitude: just as real-life discussions are frequently discursive, with the interlocutors wandering off from the main topic to side or even totally unrelated issues, so in Plutarch’s dialogues we tend to see a similar pattern of conversation (including the occasional banter).

Taking into account this fluidity of topics, a breakdown of the central themes in Plutarch’s dialogues is as follows:

The *De Tuenda Sanitate Praecepta* focuses on healthy living, dietetics and the “quarrel” between medicine and philosophy as to which discipline is best qualified to offer advice on healthy lifestyle. The symposium with its varied conversational topics, ranging from ethics and politics to physiology, astronomy and poetics, takes centre stage in Plutarch’s two sympotic dialogues: the *Septem Sapientium Convivium*, a historical dialogue, beautifully anachronistic in presenting the Seven Sages as contemporaries who convened in a Greco-Roman style symposium. And of course in the *Quaestiones Convivales*, the longest of Plutarch’s philosophical works, we see snapshots of sympotic conversations amongst Plutarch’s circle of educated friends. The three so-called Pythian dialogues (*De E apud Delphos*, *De Pythiae Oraculis* and *De Defectu Oraculorum*) seemingly focus on specific religious questions to do with the Delphic oracle, but the discussion adeptly extends to matters of theology (divine providence and divine inspiration), demonology, psychology and metaphysics. The *De Cohibenda Ira* discusses a popular ethical question, namely that of controlling one’s passions. Divine providence and cosmic justice are the central topics of the *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, but the dialogue also goes into matters of psychology and eschatology. The *De Genio Socratis* presents an interesting mix of history on the one hand and demonology, psychology and eschatology on the other: we witness the discussions of the conspirators who plotted the liberation of Thebes in 379 BC and who in between the historical action discussed Socrates’ *daimonion* and divine inspiration. Marriage, love and the metaphysical dimension of Eros are the subjects of the *Amatorius*; the discussion takes place within the context of a (supposedly) real-life event, namely the elopement of a widow with a young boy. The *De Facie in Orbe Lunae* focuses on the question of the nature and function of the moon and involves discussion of matters pertaining to astronomy, cosmology, psychology and eschatology. Animal psychology and physiology are the subjects of the two more rhetorical/declamatory pieces, *De Sollertia Animalium* and *Bruta Animalia Ratione Uti*. The former

presents us with a debate (*agon*) between two interlocutors arguing for the cleverness of land and of sea animals respectively; the latter is a more playful piece (*jeu d'esprit*) where Odysseus' companions, who were transformed into pigs by Circe, extol life as animals. Finally, philosophical polemic is the theme of three texts in dialogue form, the *De Communibus Notitiis*, directed against Stoic ethics and physics; and the *Non Posse Suaviter Vivi Secundum Epicurum* and the *Adversus Colotem* which target Epicureanism.

This rather cursory enumeration shows that the Plutarchan dialogues cover a reasonably broad range of themes that can be organised under the following general headings:

- symposium (*Septem Sapientium Convivium*, *Quaestiones Convivales*)
- philosophical polemic (*De Communibus Notitiis*, *Non Posse Suaviter Vivi Secundum Epicurum*, *Adversus Colotem*)
- ethics and practical philosophy (*De Tuenda Sanitate Praecepta* and *De Cohibenda Ira*)
- theoretical philosophy: religion and theology, natural philosophy and metaphysics, and psychology (*Pythian dialogues*, *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, *De Genio Socratis*, *De Facie in Orbe Lunae*, *Amatorius*, *De Sollertia Animalium*, *Bruta Animalia Ratione Uti*).

If we set aside the two sympotic dialogues and the three philosophical polemics, which inevitably, due to their remit, cover a variety of philosophical issues,¹² it is only the *De Cohibenda Ira* and the *De Tuenda Sanitate Praecepta* that discuss predominantly questions falling within the sphere of ethics or 'practical philosophy'.¹³ By contrast, when we look at the rest of the *Moralia*, it is not difficult to see that the overwhelming majority of the non-dialogic texts focus on questions under the broad umbrella of ethics (hence, of course, the collective title, *Moralia*). We do find a couple of non-dialogue works discussing issues pertaining to physics and natural philosophy or theology, psychology and metaphysics (for example, the *De Primo Frigido*, the *De Iside et Osiride* and the *De Animae Procreatione in Timaeo*). And we also have a few works in the genre of *zetemata/quaestiones* (for example, *Quaestiones Naturales*) and in other miscellaneous, non-dialogic formats, such as collections of *apothegmata*, that are not wholly focused on ethics but discuss a broader range of philosophical or even historical and literary topics (for example, *Conjugalium Praecepta*, *Mulierum Virtutes*, *De Herodoti Malignitate*). Nonetheless, if we look at the overall distribution of topics amongst dialogic and non-dialogic works in the extant *Moralia*, it appears that Plutarch favoured the dialogue form when it came to discussing certain theoretical issues of higher complexity and abstraction, such as divine justice, the function of the moon and its relation to the human soul, the role and operation of demons. Also interesting to note is the fact that philosophical polemics, that is, writings that openly and self-consciously set out to argue against philosophical opponents, take either the form of a treatise (*De Stoicorum Repugnantiis*, *De Latenter Vivendo*, *Stoici Absurdiora*

Poetis Dicere) or dialogue (*De Communibus Notitiis, Non Posse Suaviter Vivi Secundum Epicurum, Adversus Colotem*); it is plausible to suggest that Plutarch deployed the dialogue form for some of his polemics in order to reflect the actual debates that must have still been happening in his day between representatives of competing philosophical schools.

How does this distribution of topics in Plutarch's dialogues compare with Plato's? In Plato, the dialogues cover the whole spectrum of philosophical questions that fall under the three branches of philosophical inquiry in antiquity, namely physics/metaphysics, ethics and logic/epistemology.¹⁴ We have dialogues which focus on predominantly ethical questions (e.g. *Lysis*), others which discuss physics/metaphysics (e.g. *Timaeus*), but we also have dialogues that encompass all three broad categories of philosophical inquiry (e.g. *Republic*). For Plato, the dialogue form can thus be seen as a tool for philosophical instruction and investigation across the board. By contrast, in Plutarch, the dialogue form seems to be used predominantly when it comes to discussing topics under physics/metaphysics and logic/epistemology, while instruction on ethical questions, such as what constitutes moral virtue or how one can be happy, is offered through the more straightforward medium of a treatise. Plutarch seems to have been confident to explore ethical questions that pertained to everyday life *in propria persona*, but opted for the more fluid medium of dialogue when it came to complex theoretical and scientific questions. It is interesting to add here that Plato's account of the generation of the universe, a highly complex philosophical question, is given in one of the least dialogic of the Platonic dialogues, the *Timaeus*, which has, nonetheless, been a major influence underlying some of Plutarch's theoretical dialogues (e.g. *De Facie in Orbe Lunae*).

Typology of Plutarchan dialogues

The breakdown of themes in the Plutarchan dialogues invites the question: what is it about the dialogue form that made it more suitable for the treatment by Plutarch of certain theoretical, 'high philosophy' issues? To answer this question, we need to look at the structural features and narrative techniques of the Plutarchan dialogues.¹⁵

First, a Plutarchan dialogue typically involves at least two (e.g. *De Cohibenda Ira*, *De Tuenda Sanitate Praecepta*), and in most cases more than two interlocutors (e.g. *De Facie in Orbe Lunae*, *De E apud Delphos*, *De Pythiae Oraculis*, *De Defectu Oraculorum*, *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*), who take turns in presenting different or opposing views on the question under discussion. The format is more like a succession of monologues of varying length than a 'quick', Socratic-style, line-by-line, question-and-answer exchange. If we look for a Platonic model, then this should certainly be the later Platonic dialogues (*Timaeus*, *Statesman*, *Laws*) rather than the earlier aporetic Socratic dialogues. There is usually a lead speaker who orchestrates the exchange of views and whose contribution to the discussion seems to be the most authoritative one, often coming in play at the end. Plutarch himself appears as the speaker and/or narrator in six of his dialogues.¹⁶ In the remaining dialogues, Plutarch presents another character, often someone from

his close circle of family and friends, who assumes the role of the lead speaker (for example, Lamprias, Plutarch's brother, leads the discussion in the *De Defectu Oraculorum* and Theon, Plutarch's friend, in the *De Pythiae Oraculis*). While Plutarch's appearance as a speaker breaks away from the Platonic exemplum of authorial 'absence', it is still significant that, in the majority of the extant dialogues, Plutarch stays discretely away as a direct voice contributing to the conversation. Like Plato, Plutarch seems to prefer to leave the dialogue stage to the interlocutors and to let the reader work out the outcome (if any) of the conversation for himself.¹⁷

Second, like many Platonic dialogues (such as the *Symposium*, the *Republic* or the *Phaedo*), most of Plutarch's dialogues are narrated: Plutarch, or another character appearing in the list of *dramatis personae*, reports, usually at the request of his interlocutor, a conversation that had taken place at an earlier time. In some cases (for example, in *De Pythiae Oraculis*, *De Genio Socratis*, *Amatorius*), a frame dialogue at the beginning lays out the background for the reported conversation to follow and frequently contains important hints about the interpretation of the dialogue. Only four of the sixteen Plutarchan dialogues are 'dramatic', that is, directly performed, with no intervention from a narrator: these are the *De Cohibenda Ira*, *De Sollertia Animalium*, *Bruta Animalia Ratione Uti*, *De Communibus Notitiis*. And there are two 'mixed' dialogues, the *De Genio Socratis* and *Amatorius*, which combine an introductory dramatic dialogue 'in real (narrative) time', followed by a dialogue narrated by one of the characters in the introductory exchange (who, however, may or may not have been present himself in the discussion he reports, as, for example, in the case of the *Amatorius*).¹⁸ Table 1.1 below summarises the typology of Plutarch's dialogues.

Table 1.1 The typology of Plutarch's dialogues

Dramatic dialogues		Narrated dialogues		Mixed dialogues	
Plutarch present	Plutarch absent	Plutarch present	Plutarch absent	Plutarch present	Plutarch absent
	<i>De Cohibenda Ira</i>	<i>De E apud Delphos</i>	<i>De Tuenda Sanitate</i>	<i>Amatorius</i> (speaker only)	
	<i>De Sollertia Animalium</i>	<i>De Sera Numinis Vindicta</i>	<i>De Pythiae Oraculis</i>		<i>De Genio Socratis</i>
	<i>Bruta Animalia Ratione Uti</i>	<i>Quaestiones Convivales</i>	<i>De Defectu Oraculorum</i>		
	<i>De Communibus Notitiis</i>	<i>Non Posse Suaviter Vivi Secundum Epicurum</i>	<i>De Facie in Orbe Lunae</i>		
		<i>Adversus Colotem</i>	<i>Septem Sapientium Convivium</i>		

Plutarch's preference for reported dialogues is interesting and worthy of note: firstly, the narrated dialogues make room for extra-dialogic interjections on the part of the narrator, whether these are comments and often subtle evaluations on the views discussed, or descriptions of 'extralinguistic conversational behaviours', to borrow a term from Hölsle.¹⁹ Second, in those reported dialogues in particular where he is absent as a character (for example, in the *De Facie in Orbe Lunae*), Plutarch is able to create additional distance between himself as author and the content of the discussion: in both the dramatic and the narrated dialogues, the author (Plutarch) appears not wholly responsible for everything that was said or the way it was said; the voice belongs, at least seemingly, to the characters speaking (usually in direct speech). But if in the dramatic dialogues the characters speak for themselves in real time and we have the illusion of witnessing the discussion directly, in the narrated dialogue, there is the added element of time lapse. The intervention of a narrator, who can be other than the author (as is the case in the *Amatorius*), and the passage of time between the original dialogue and its report can act as a subtle disclaimer on the part of the author regarding the accuracy, subjectivity and perhaps also the truth value of the discussion.

Looking now at the themes of the Plutarchan dialogues in conjunction with the narrative techniques followed in each case, it seems that the more complex and abstract the matter under discussion, the more intricate the dialogic format in which they are set. Thus, the two ethical dialogues (*De Cohibenda Ira* and *De Tuenda Sanitate Praecepta*) are dialogic only at the beginning, the main body in both cases being more like a treatise with a straightforward voice, that of the central character, offering a diatribe-like exposition. By contrast, those dialogues that deal with complex questions pertaining to theology, physics, metaphysics and psychology, that is, questions that go beyond the realm of direct everyday human experience, usually have more intricate structures. There are two exceptions here and these are the *De Sollertia Animalium* and the *Bruta Animalia Ratione Uti*, which are more rhetorical pieces.²⁰

I will focus briefly here on the *De Facie in Orbe Lunae* as an example. The key issue in the dialogue is the explanation of the appearance of a face on the surface of the moon. Inevitably, the question leads to the discussion of the natural constitution of the moon, its motion, its relationship and interaction with the earth and the Sun, as well as with the other planets, and ultimately its function in the universe. Different speakers present possible explanations that touch upon mathematics, astronomy, cosmology and metaphysics. The dialogue is presented to us as a recorded conversation that happened in the past; the details of this conversation are not given, at least not in what survives of the text, which is mutilated at the beginning. The narrator is Plutarch's brother Lamprias, the lead figure in the recorded dialogue and possibly the spokesperson of Plutarch himself. Plutarch masterfully constructs different narrative layers: the first-level narrated dialogue where Lamprias and Sulla are the key figures and take the lead in the two distinct parts of the dialogue, the scientific-philosophical beginning and the mythological-eschatological end, respectively. Within the first, scientific-philosophical, part of the dialogue, we have a second-level, embedded conversation, which had taken

place earlier and which Lamprias reports in summary (chapters 2–23, cf. 937C) following a request from Sulla at the beginning of the text we have in hand (920B). Sulla's part of the dialogue is itself structured in layers, as Sulla reports the myth he heard from a stranger who had himself heard the story from the servitors of Cronus (945D). The reader, therefore, receives at least some sections of the scientific-philosophical part at third hand,²¹ and Sulla's myth at fourth hand.²² All these interconnected narrative layers in the *De Facie in Orbe Lunae* add some chronological, but also psychological, distance from the actual arguments recounted; the result is that the reader is presented with a series of subjective reports with varied levels of accuracy or certainty. The layered structure functions almost like a disclaimer for the reader and this is reflected in the concluding words of the dialogue: 'you make what you will of this *logos*', Sulla says to Lamprias at 945D; but this line can easily be taken as Plutarch's own disclaimer to his readers.

The dialogue form and Plutarch's academic caution

So, to return to the bigger picture, it seems that the dialogue form affords Plutarch flexibility in terms of the authorial voice and consequently also in terms of the level of objectivity and epistemic status of the discussion. Unlike his ethical treatises, or even his ethical dialogues, in which Plutarch (or his spokesperson) assumes a more overtly authoritative voice, that of the teacher/educator who delivers a moral lesson to his readers/audience, in his theoretical 'high philosophy' dialogues, Plutarch the author is, at first sight at least, more elusive and less forthright. Multiple views on the theoretical issue in question (for example, divine inspiration, divine justice, the nature of the moon) are given a voice, often through different narrative layers (as in the *De Facie in Orbe Lunae*) and genuine debate between the participants ensues (for example, in the *De Sera Numinis Vindicta* and in the *De Defectu Oraculorum*). Some views are obviously more credible than others; and this is also revealed in the discussion: for example, in the *De E apud Delphi* (386A), the view proposed by Lamprias is undermined by the narrator's comment that '... Lamprias had been indulging in a mere opinion of his own and was fabricating history and tradition ...'²³ Yet the outcome of the discussion is, for the most part, a sense of open-endedness: the matter is not overtly settled for good nor is a single view openly declared as the absolute winner of the debate. Thus, the *De Defectu Oraculorum* ends with a call to continue investigating the question of prophetic inspiration, as what had been said so far invites objections and contrasting views (438D–E).²⁴

Now this approach to philosophical dialogue by Plutarch is not surprising. As has been argued by recent Plutarchan scholarship,²⁵ Plutarch aligned himself with the philosophical tradition of the Academy, which advocates suspension of judgement in matters that are unclear and which Plutarch saw as a direct continuation of, rather than a break from, Plato. He accordingly embraced both the aporetic spirit of the Academy and an attitude of caution when it came to highly theoretical matters to do with the intelligible world and the divine. So in the *De Defectu Oraculorum* 430F, he urges: 'But if in any other place we have recalled the

Academy to our mind, let us do so here as well, and divest ourselves of excessive credulity and, as if we were in a slippery place in our discussion about infinity, let us merely keep a firm footing'.²⁶ The dialogue form with the narratological flexibility it offers was, therefore, a most appropriate medium for Plutarch to explore philosophical issues on which certainty is difficult to reach because of the limits of human knowledge. In other words, the dialogue form, as used in Plutarch's more technical philosophical dialogues, is not simply a literary ploy but a philosophical necessity due to the nature of the subject matter.

And yet, Plutarch's theoretical dialogues, open ended though they are, they do not fail to give us clues towards a plausible answer or theory concerning the matter under discussion. As already noted, there is usually a lead speaker (not necessarily Plutarch) who acts as the catalyst in the discussion and whose contribution is presented as the most likely account; this is often signalled by positioning in the running order of the dialogue (the most plausible view presented last). For example, in the *De E apud Delphos*, it is Ammonius, the teacher of Plutarch and by default a senior figure, who delivers the final speech and offers an authoritative, metaphysical interpretation of the letter E (391E–394C). The term *eikos*, which reflects epistemic caution but also opens up the possibility of a promising route for further inquiry, is sometimes used as a signpost for the favoured, most likely view. Thus, for example, in the *De Facie in Orbe Lunae* 934F–935A, when all the seemingly expert views on the constitution of the moon put forward by mathematicians, astronomers and rival philosophers have been presented and refuted, the main speaker, Lamprias, argues that the moon is most likely of earthy constitution: 'It is likely, however, that the moon has not a single plane surface like the sea but closely resembles in constitution the earth that the ancient Socrates made the subject of a myth, whether he really was speaking in riddles about this earth or was giving a description of some other'.²⁷

Conclusion

Plutarch's use of the dialogue form is, not surprisingly, multifaceted. We find Plutarchan dialogues which are dialogic only at first sight; but we also have dialogues in which the dialogic form is integral to Plutarch's philosophical approach towards the particular question under discussion. Plutarch uses the dialogue both as a Platonesque literary ploy and as a philosophical tool, depending on the subject matter under discussion and his own level of confidence in attaining knowledge. Thus, in the ethical dialogues, the dialogue form can be taken only as a 'literary subterfuge'²⁸ – a meaningful one, but a subterfuge nonetheless. The polemical dialogues too are in reality confident and hardly open-ended monologues against traditional opponents; in this case, the dialogue form is meant to evoke to the reader the sense of a real philosophical debate, like those held in the philosophical schools of the past and present. The sympotic dialogues are dialogic by default, given their genre. And it is in the theoretical dialogues where Plutarch's use of the dialogue form becomes entwined with the content and is employed to convey open-endedness and caution, through the flexibility it affords as a narrative technique.

There is no doubt that Plutarch was firmly embedded within the Platonic tradition and wished to see himself as such. However, the way he deploys the dialogue form has moved beyond the strict Platonic example; Socratic-style, quick-paced, elenctic debate is not the trademark of Plutarch's dialogues; nor is it the case that the Plutarchan dialogue is simply a replica of the quasi-dialogic Platonic *Timaeus*. Plutarch's dialogues are not as aporetic as the early Platonic dialogues nor as monologic as late Plato; and Plutarch the author is not entirely absent from them. But where it matters, namely when the issues at stake are too philosophically complex to warrant a single answer, the dialogue form becomes an important tool of constructive open-endedness: different sides of the question are genuinely considered, but a cautious direction towards the most plausible answer is also given.

If this reading of Plutarch's dialogues is correct, then how does it contribute to our understanding of the development of dialogue in late antiquity and beyond? According to Goldhill's account in *The End of Dialogue*, Christians 'don't do dialogue', in the sense that they do not engage in genuine, open-ended debate, largely because their cultural setting and intellectual and religious preoccupations did not leave room for genuine debate. As Averil Cameron argues in her recent book *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, Goldhill takes a rather narrow (and perhaps also rather modern) view of what it means to do dialogue. The Plutarchan example of dialoguing can be seen to add substance to this argument. Dialogue is not just about Socratic-style debating nor about the Bakhtinian dialogic; it is a literary form with a wide range of uses and ramifications: it can be used to convey the limits of human knowledge but also the genuine attempt to arrive at a plausible answer to a given philosophical (or for that matter, theological or political) question through the juxtaposition of different possibilities. Plutarch's dialogues, much like his version of Platonism, are a fusion of academic caution with Platonic authority; and as such they may have presented an interesting alternative to the Platonic dialogues for the generations that followed.

Notes

- * I would like to thank the organisers of the 'Dialogues and Debates from Late Antiquity to Late Byzantium' conference for the opportunity to present a paper on Plutarch's dialogues and to receive helpful comments from the conference participants. I am particularly grateful to Averil Cameron for her insightful suggestions for improving the first draft of this paper and for all her encouragement.
- 1 See Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 3.48, ed. Hicks, 1:318: διαλόγους τοίνυν φασὶ πρῶτον γράψαι Ζήνωνα τὸν Ἐλεάτην· Ἀριστοτέλης δὲ ἐν πρῶτῳ Περὶ ποιητῶν Ἀλεξάμενον Στυρέα ἢ Τήμον, ὡς καὶ Φαβωρίνος ἐν Ἀπομνημονεύμασι. δοκεῖ δέ μοι Πλάτων ἀκριβῶσας τὸ εἶδος καὶ τὰ πρωτεῖα δικαίως ἂν ὥσπερ τοῦ κάλλους οὕτω καὶ τῆς εὐρέσεως ἀποφέρεσθαι; trans. Hicks, 1:319: 'They say that Zeno the Eleatic was the first to write dialogues. But according to Favorinus in his *Memorabilia*, Aristotle in the first book of his dialogue *On Poets* asserts that it was Alexamenos of Styra or Teos. In my opinion Plato, who brought this form of writing to perfection, ought to be adjudged the prize for its invention as well as for its embellishment'. Cf. Goldhill, 'Why Don't Christians Do Dialogue?', 3 who presents Plato as 'the single figure most evidently associated with the invention of the literary form of the dialogue'.

- 2 Dicaearchus, Heraclides of Pontus, Clearchus of Soloi, Eratosthenes of Cyrene are some of the writers who produced dialogues in the Hellenistic era. In the Roman period, Dio of Prusa, Philostratus and, of course, Lucian, are Plutarch's contemporaries or near-contemporaries who had also written dialogues.
- 3 On the richness of dialoguing in late antiquity and through to Byzantium, see Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity* and *Arguing It Out*.
- 4 The influence of Lucian's dialogues was also felt in the Byzantine 'satirical' dialogues; see Cullhed in this volume. However, these are usually studied by literary scholars and differentiated from the more philosophical or theological dialogues.
- 5 It should be noted here that Plutarch must have also been familiar with Aristotle's dialogues, as he preserves most of the fragments we have available today. To what extent Plutarch was influenced by Aristotle's dialogue writing is anyone's guess, given that no Aristotelian dialogue is extant.
- 6 Unfortunately, this view does not seem to be shared by Vittorio Hösle, whose monograph on the philosophical dialogue and its development from antiquity onwards includes only a handful of references to Plutarch. See Hösle, *The Philosophical Dialogue*.
- 7 See, for example, McCabe, 'Form and the Platonic Dialogues'; Long, 'Plato's Dialogues'.
- 8 This elusiveness is less visible in the later Platonic dialogues, such as the *Timaeus*; nonetheless, the difficulty in uncovering Plato's own thinking on the matters under discussion there remains.
- 9 Goldhill, 'Why Don't Christians Do Dialogue?', 3.
- 10 The authenticity of some of these texts (e.g. *De Liberis Educandis*) has been contested, but this is not an issue to be discussed in the context of this paper.
- 11 For a very illuminating discussion of the different literary forms we find in the *Moralia*, see Gallo, 'Forma Letteraria nei "Moralia" di Plutarco'. Gallo warns, however, against imposing too strict boundaries between the genres in the *Moralia*: there is fluidity in the way Plutarch employs different literary forms for different texts in the *Moralia* and, as Gallo notes (3519) we often have a 'contamination' of genres, especially in texts where the overarching aim is ethical instruction (e.g. treatises such as *De Vitioso Pudore* and dialogues such as *De Cohibenda Ira*). In such cases, it is not always easy to impose a clear-cut classification.
- 12 For a detailed discussion of the genre of the symposium in Greco-Roman and early Christian literature and Plutarch's sympotic dialogues, see König, *Saints and Symposiasts*, 60–89.
- 13 It is noteworthy that these two works are the least 'dialogic' of Plutarch's dialogues: in both works, the dialogue is restricted to an introductory exchange with the main body of the text being in effect a monologue, very much in the style of the typical Plutarchan ethical treatise, such as *De Garrulitate*: see further below.
- 14 On the tripartite division of philosophy in antiquity, see Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos*, 7.16, Diogenes Laertius, 1.18, 3.56.
- 15 A full narratological analysis of the Plutarchan dialogues would be an extremely worthwhile task, but too ambitious and complex to fit the framework of the present paper.
- 16 Plutarch is a speaker and the narrator in: *De Sera Numinis Nindicta*, *De E apud Delphos*, *Quaestiones Convivales*, *Non Posse Suaviter Vivi Secundum Epicurum*, *Adversus Colotem*; he is a speaker-only in *Amatorius* with Autobulus, his son, being the narrator.
- 17 For an insightful analysis of the interplay between Plutarch's voice as a speaker and as a narrator in the *Quaestiones Convivales*, see König, 'Self-Promotion and Self-Effacement'. König argues that the tension between Plutarch's authoritative voice as speaker in some of the *Quaestiones* and his self-effacing voice as narrator in others is at least partly a reflection of the sympotic context of the work, where the individual contribution has to

- be held in balance with the communality of the symposium. While this explanation cannot be applied to the non-sympotic dialogues, König's discussion offers useful pointers towards a better understanding of Plutarch's choice of narrative voice in his dialogues.
- 18 This classification of the types of Plutarchan dialogue follows the one which Diogenes Laertius gives with respect to Plato's dialogues (*Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, 3.50, ed. Hicks, 1:320): οὐ λανθάνει δ' ἡμᾶς ὅτι τινὲς ἄλλως διαφέρειν τοὺς διαλόγους φασί—λέγουσι γὰρ αὐτῶν τοὺς μὲν δραματικούς, τοὺς δὲ διηγηματικούς, τοὺς δὲ μεικτούς; trans. Hicks, 1:321: 'I am not unaware that there are other ways in which certain writers classify the dialogues. For some dialogues they call dramatic, others narrative, and others again a mixture of the two'.
 - 19 Hölsle, *Philosophical Dialogue*, 171.
 - 20 See Mossman and Titchener, 'Bitch is Not a Four-Letter Word' for a discussion of Plutarch's rhetorical strategies in these two dialogues.
 - 21 The three levels are: the earlier conversation in which Sulla asks Lamprias to report, the conversation with Sulla and Lamprias's first person narration.
 - 22 The four levels are: the servitors of Cronus telling the story to the stranger, the stranger telling the story to Sulla, Sulla reporting the story to Lamprias and Lamprias's first-person narration.
 - 23 Plutarch, *De E apud Delphi*, 386A, ed. Babbitt, 206: ἰδίᾳ τὸν Λαμπρίαν δόξῃ κεχρηῆσθαι, πλάττεσθαι δ' ἱστορίαν καὶ ἀκοὴν ἐτέρων; trans. Babbitt, 207.
 - 24 Plutarch, *De Defectu Oraculorum*, 438D, ed. Babbitt, 500: 'ταῦτ' ἔφην ἐγὼ 'πολλάκις ἀνασκέπτεσθαι καὶ ὑμᾶς παρακαλῶ καὶ ἐμαντόν, ὥς ἔχοντα πολλὰς ἀντιλήψεις καὶ ὑπονοίας πρὸς τοῦναντίον . . .'; trans. Babbitt, 501: 'These matters,' I added, 'I urge upon you for your frequent consideration, as well as my own, in the belief that they contain much to which objections might be made and many suggestions looking to a contrary conclusion . . .'
 - 25 See Karamanolis, *Plato and Aristotle in Agreement*, 85–9; Karamanolis, 'Plutarch'; Opsomer, 'The Place of Plutarch'.
 - 26 Plutarch, *De Defectu Oraculorum*, 430F, ed. Babbitt, 460: εἰ δ' ἄλλαχόθι που ἀνταῦθα τῆς Ἀκαδημείας ὑπομινέσκοντες ἑαυτοὺς τὸ ἄγαν τῆς πίστεως ἀφαιρῶμεν καὶ τὴν ἀσφάλειαν ὥσπερ ἐν χωρίῳ σφαλερῷ τῷ περὶ τῆς ἀπειρίας λόγῳ μόνον διασφώζομεν; trans. Babbitt, 461.
 - 27 Plutarch, *De Facie in Orbe Lunae*, 934F–935A, ed. Cherniss and Helmbold, 138–40: τὴν δὲ σελήνην οὐκ εἰκὸς ὥσπερ τὴν θάλασσαν μίαν ἔχειν ἐπιφάνειαν, ἀλλ' εὐκέναι μάλιστα τῇ γῇ τὴν φύσιν, ἣν ἐμυθολόγει Σωκράτης ὁ παλαιός εἶτε δὴ ταύτην αἰνιττόμενος εἶτε δὴ ἄλλην τινὰ διηγούμενος; trans. Cherniss and Helmbold, 139–41.
 - 28 According to Babbitt in his introduction to the Loeb edition of the *De Tuenda Sanitate Praecepta*, 215: 'The dialogue form is merely a literary subterfuge to present an essay in a slightly more attractive form, and the third person of the dialogue, only occasionally recalled to the reader by the parsimonious interjection of "he said," may be presumed to be Plutarch, the author'. This view is contested by Lieve van Hoof in her *Plutarch's Practical Ethics*, 214–23.

Sources

- Diogenes Laertius, *Vitae Philosophorum*, edited by Herbert S. Long and English translation by Robert D. Hicks, *Diogenes Laertius: Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. Loeb 184. Revised edition. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972.
- Plutarch, *Moralia*, edited and translated by Frank Cole Babbitt, William C. Helmbold, Philip De Lacy, Benedict Einarson, Paul A. Clement, Herbert B. Hoffleit, Harold F. Cherniss, Edwin L. Minar, et al. 15 vols. Loeb. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927–1969.

2 *Erostraphus*, a Syriac dialogue with Socrates on the soul

Alberto Rigolio

Some of the earliest known literary works written in Syriac are prose dialogues. According to Eusebius of Caesarea, Bardaisan (154–c.222 CE) composed dialogues against religious opponents, which, unfortunately, have not survived. In the same decades, a follower of Bardaisan, possibly his pupil Philip, was the author of the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*, a remarkably ambitious dialogue clearly influenced by Hellenistic literary and philosophical traditions.¹ Later, in the fifth century, John of Apamea composed prose dialogues whose setting is very different from the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*. John of Apamea's dialogues take place within Christian ascetic communities, between a solitary, the main speaker, and Christian brothers who are at different stages of ascetic advancement.² At the same time, there circulated Syriac translations of Greek dialogues, such as Gregory the Wonderworker's *To Theopompus on the Impassibility and Passibility of God*³ and the *Erostraphus*,⁴ the work that is the subject of the present chapter.

The *Erostraphus* deals with philosophical themes in a didactic format. The dialogue features two speakers, Socrates and a pupil identified as Erostraphus, and its plot consists entirely of Socrates's response to Erostraphus's questions about the nature of the soul and its relation to the body. The instructional tone of the dialogue is evident in Erostraphus's acceptance of Socrates's explanation, and their conversation can thus be understood as a teacher-pupil relationship. In addition, there is a narrative voice that records the reactions of the speakers during the dialogue and closes the text with an epilogue, as will be pointed out below. However, the contribution of the *Erostraphus* to our understanding of dialogue writing in early Syriac literature and, beyond it, of late antique literature more generally, depends on our grasp of the dialogue's authorship and of the cultural and historical milieu in which the *Erostraphus* originated.

Despite the fact that the figure of Socrates may be a reference to the Platonic tradition, the dialogue was not authored by Plato, and, unfortunately, its origin, in all likelihood late antique, seems to escape any obvious classification. In 1895, Rudolf Hirzel admitted 'vollkommen im Unklaren zu sein' about the origin of the *Erostraphus*, and confessed himself unable to find its appropriate place within his comprehensive history of dialogue literature. Similarly puzzled

by the contents of the work, in 1929 Alfred Taylor was 'not able to understand the confused reply of Socrates'.⁵ Despite the difficulty found by modern scholars in relating the *Erosthophus* to known literary and philosophical traditions, the modern reader will nonetheless face a fascinating and bewildering text. The aim of the present paper is thus to provide some guidance by bringing together recent work, and to suggest some links to late antique literature that may contribute to a better understanding of the cultural and historical milieu to which the *Erosthophus* is a witness.

Origins

Unfortunately, no indication of authorship or chronology is provided by the only surviving manuscript (MS British Library Add. 14,658). The manuscript, which contains a remarkable collection of philosophical and moral texts both in the Syriac original and in translation from Greek, was copied during the sixth or seventh centuries, and accordingly the Syriac text of the *Erosthophus* was composed earlier than this date.⁶ In addition, the contents of the dialogue indicate that the piece is certainly post-Platonic, but since there are no explicit elements that could point at a more precise chronology, its date of composition has to be assessed on the basis of internal evidence alone.⁷

In all likelihood, the dialogue was originally written in Greek. William Newbold was the only scholar who argued instead that Syriac was the original language of the *Erosthophus*, and, in his view, the School of Bardaisan was a likely milieu in which the work could have been composed.⁸ The differences between the *Erosthophus* and Bardesanite doctrines, however, are at least as important as the similarities between them, and Newbold's hypothesis was not taken up by later authors. Conversely, modern scholars have noticed that the *Erosthophus* presents linguistic features that are unusual for a text originally composed in Syriac, and apart from Newbold there is a consensus that the dialogue was translated from Greek.⁹ The translation of the *Erosthophus* into Syriac might tentatively be understood within the sixth-century wave of translations from Greek which included the transmission of philosophical texts, but archaic features of the language make an earlier chronology also possible.¹⁰

The process of translation could explain at least some of the idiosyncratic features of the text of the *Erosthophus*. It is possible to conceive that the syntax of the dialogue, which is often extremely elliptical, may be the result of a concern to follow the Greek original closely. The loss of the original, however, makes it difficult to assess the overall extent to which the language of the *Erosthophus* mirrors the style of the Greek, and, in addition, one cannot decide whether the process of translation might explain the allusive and concise language that Socrates employs, which seems overall to be unsatisfactory for a philosophical text. Likewise, there are not enough elements on the basis of which to blame the process of translation for the apparent lack of a more comprehensive explanation by Socrates, which would have no doubt benefited the modern reader.

Contents

The dialogue deals primarily with the two questions that Erostraphus puts to Socrates in the opening section of the text: ‘First, (I beg you to) tell me what the soul is; secondly, I intend to ask you whether its constitution is everlasting’.¹¹ In order to answer the questions, Socrates produces a fairly extensive treatment of the nature of the soul that makes up most of the dialogue. He asserts that, before dealing with the soul, he intends to talk about an entity that he initially identifies as ‘Greatness and Power’ (161.5: *كبرياء وقوة*), but later only as ‘Power’ (*قوة*). A fundamental feature of Power (possibly *δύναμις*) is that ‘it does not waste away and is not changed, and it neither decreases nor increases’ (161.5–6); but, at the same time, Power has a creative faculty, and it should probably be identified as a divine principle (162.11). This principle is closely related to (or, possibly, fully identified as) what Erostraphus and Socrates elsewhere refer to as the ‘primal Root’ or ‘primal Principle’ (*جذر مبدئ*), ‘from which’—Socrates explains—‘you [Erostraphus] came into being’ (161.10; 162.5–6 for the close relation between the two).

In addition to the creative faculty, the primal Root or Principle plays a fundamental role in sensory perceptions and, it seems, in the intellectual activity of human beings. It is argued that, while sight, hearing and speaking (*سماع*, possibly *λόγος*, which should also be understood as ‘reason’ as in 161.20–21) can appear to be divided among the sense organs within the body, they nonetheless have the same single Root or Principle (161.28–29). In addition, it is explained that the primal Root connects and extends everywhere, and, in a simile, is like a tree whose branches facing different directions represent men (162.3–8). In fact, as Socrates explains, ‘all’ (*كل*; or possibly *τὸ ὅλον* ‘the universe’) is ultimately made up of (or ‘by’) the Power (or, if they coincide as it seems, the primal Root or Principle) (162.11).

Before treating the soul, however, Socrates describes the composition of the body, possibly because – he argues – ‘the soul without a body would be both invisible and unmovable’.¹² According to Socrates, the body is made up of the four elements (*στοιχεῖα*) – fire, water, air and earth – which are intermingled in a balanced mixture (162.14–21 with 166.10–11). An excess or shortage of any of the elements produces a damaging effect on the body, and, on this occasion, Socrates redirects Erostraphus to the books written by physicians if he wants to know exactly what bodily organs can be harmed by an imbalance of the element (162.21–30). Instead, Socrates himself is interested in *how* (*كيفية*) the causes (*سبب*) derive from the elements of the body (163.4 with 162.25–163.16).

Here Socrates moves on to an excursus on fire. It is argued that fire is the first and the chief among the four elements (165.3), and, most importantly, the soul ‘holds’ a part of this element (163.19; 164.5). Fire acts as nourishment for the soul, and Socrates explains this concept through a comparison between the Sun and the human body, both of which contain the element of fire. The reason why the human body is not tormented by heat or cold in spring and autumn, but is so tormented in summer and winter, is because the heat of the Sun is moderate during

the two middle seasons. During spring and autumn, the power of the element of fire in the Sun is mild, and it thus produces a temperate amenity that is appropriate for the wellbeing of humans. In like manner, the power of the fire that is in the body and that the soul holds is not constant, but varies throughout human life, not unlike the way in which the intensity of the Sun varies throughout the year. As a result, during childhood the power of the soul is moderate, during adulthood the power of the soul increases and during old age the power of the soul weakens. In addition, since fire is fundamental to keep the elements together and to form the body, when the fire that is intermingled in the soul is dissolved, the remaining three elements likewise dissolve.

Finally, Socrates provides a definition of the soul: ‘The mixture of the four elements, and the mingling of one with the others – he says – should be seen and called soul’.¹³ Socrates, however, is not especially concerned with the terms that can be used to designate the soul, and he invites Erosthophus to ‘give the soul the names you want. If you want to name it fire, name it so; if you want to name it soul, name it so; if you want to name it mind (perhaps νοῦς), name it so; or if you want to name it *physis*, name it so’.¹⁴ Also, the soul is everlasting (166.4; 166.28), but it had an origin, and this origin is in the Power. In fact, originally the Power stirred the soul, and removed the soul from itself; and the soul, then, forged and formed the body out of the four elements, according to the *logos* (λογος) and according to the position of the celestial bodies (166.10–15). A simile that Socrates uses to explain the action of the soul is that of milk that needs rennet to coagulate (166.24). Also, the soul pervades ‘everything’ (possibly again τὸ ὅλον ‘the universe’) and, since the soul holds a ‘seed’ of Power in itself, it follows that the Power is in everything (162.19–26). Despite its temporary mixture with a body that is dissolvable, however, the Power itself is not changed (166.25–30).

At the close of his discourse, Socrates moves on to a brief section dealing with ethics. Here he strongly condemns human pleasures, and relates the moral behaviour of human beings to the physical ‘holding’ function of the soul within the body (166.30–167.11). The dialogue closes with a narrative passage that describes Erosthophus’s satisfaction with the instruction that he has received from Socrates and remarks on the benefit that all those who attended the dialogue gained from Socrates’s words. In a simile, the discourse and the philosophy of Socrates are compared to two springs of water that make the land fertile and thus bring forth abundant produce.

Philosophical background

Finding a work in Syriac underpinned by Greek philosophical traditions prompts a preliminary question about the religious affiliation of its author. Is the dialogue the work of a Christian author, perhaps an attempt to bring together Greek philosophical traditions with Christianity? Or is it simply the work of a non-Christian? The manuscript in which it is preserved contains philosophical works of non-Christian origin, such as translations of Aristotle and Porphyry, as well as Christian works as diverse as the Bardesanite *Book of the Laws of the Countries* and the adaptation

of Ps.-Justin's *Oratio ad Graecos*, so either scenario seems theoretically possible. The dialogue, however, does not contain explicit references to Christianity or to religious paganism, and a definitive answer on the religious affiliation of the author on the basis of the contents of the text requires further analysis.

A problem that Christian readers of the *Erosthophus* might have encountered is the issue of determinism. It is remarkable that the author accepts at least some degree of determinism in the way in which the soul forges the body out of the four elements. In particular, the 'seven Leaders and Servants', which should in all likelihood be identified with celestial bodies, play a role that can possibly be understood as fate. The *logos* (λογος) also plays a part in determining what the soul should form, but, unfortunately, from the text it is not possible to determine what, and if so what exactly, is left to human will (166.10–14). Such a position on destiny may appear to be in contrast with many Christian views, but it might not be too dissimilar from the downsized role credited to fate in the *Book of the Laws of the Countries*, which is preserved in the same manuscript.

Similarly, the apparent materialism that Socrates proposes and the definition of the soul merely as a mixture of the four elements may appear at first sight incompatible with Christian belief, but we are aware that some Christians, most notably Tertullian, believed in the materiality of the soul.¹⁵ The dialogue makes no reference to the Scriptures, or to patristic literature, but there is the possibility that a passage is reminiscent of a line from *Psalms* 134(135).¹⁶ Whether the author of the dialogue was attempting to reconcile notions of Greek philosophy with Christianity remains difficult to establish on the basis of the text that survives, but, if this was the case, this enterprise was less explicit than, for instance, Nemesius of Emesa's *De natura hominis* (late fourth century), which brought together different philosophical traditions in the attempt to find a harmonisation with Christianity.¹⁷

However, the identification of the doctrine of the *Erosthophus* with an established philosophical tradition of non-Christian origin is likewise problematic. The character of Socrates may recall the Platonic tradition, but the view that the element of fire is in the soul (164.21) and intermingled with the soul (165.5), as well as the belief that the soul is a mixture of the four elements (165.25), seems difficult to reconcile with the doctrine of the incorporeal soul that underpins Platonism. The doctrine that the soul without the body is immovable (162.15) likewise marks a distance from Platonism and appears instead closer to Aristotelian philosophy, according to which the soul cannot be moved at all, except as a passenger in the body.¹⁸

The author of the *Erosthophus* accepts the view that the body is composed of the four elements, and believes that any disequilibrium in the proportion of the elements would compromise its wellbeing. This doctrine appears to be in accordance with the Hippocratic and Galenic tradition; and the definition of the soul as a 'mixture' may likewise derive from Galen. Although to some extent reluctant to provide a definition of the soul, in the treatise *The Capacities of the Soul Depend on the Mixtures of the Body*, Galen claimed to follow Aristotle when he described the substance of the soul as a κρῆσις, 'mixture', of the four elements.¹⁹ Again, Galen's view of the soul as a mixture is strongly rejected by Nemesius of Emesa.²⁰

Stoic philosophy stands out as another important source of influence, as Alfred Taylor had originally suggested.²¹ It is remarkable that Socrates provides a long excursus on fire, which he describes as the first and the chief among the four elements (165.3); and, in addition, says that the soul ‘holds’ a part of this element (163.19; 164.5).²² These statements would have found many Stoics in agreement. Also, Socrates’s unusual description of the Power (25–166.5 ;6–161.1) (سله) does not appear too far from a doctrine that Sextus Empiricus attributed to the Stoics. According to this view, there exists a ‘Power (δύναμις) that is in itself self-moving, which would be divine and eternal’; and this ‘Power that moves matter and imposes on it, in an orderly way, generations and changes is eternal. Consequently, it would be God’.²³

To sum up, an initial overview of the contents of the *Erostrophus* has shown that the author does not adhere to an established philosophical school but rather appears to derive elements from different traditions. Galen and Stoicism stand out as plausible sources of influence on the doctrines expressed in the dialogue, and further analysis would be necessary to identify possible links with the views of early Christian authors on the soul.

Identity of the speakers

The text makes reference to individuals attending the dialogue (167.20), but Socrates and Erostrophus are the only two speaking characters, and their exchanges are occasionally interrupted by short narrative passages that set the scene and hint at their reactions. While the identification of Socrates depends on the tradition of dialogues featuring Socrates, the identification of *Erostrophus* is not exactly straightforward. The <ϕ> in the name and the ending in <-ws> are indicators of a word of Greek origin, but scholars have not been able to identify an attested Greek name that would be the exact equivalent. In addition, the word <'rstrpws> can be vocalised in different ways, and the reading *Erostrophus* proposed by Ernest Renan in 1852 and followed by the editor, Paul de Lagarde, in 1858 is based on mere guesswork.²⁴ That Erostrophus was a made-up name remains a possibility that cannot be ruled out at this stage.

If, instead, <'rstrpws> is the distortion or a misreading of an originally Greek name, at least two hypotheses have been put forward.²⁵ The first possibility, which Renan put forward, is that the original name of the speaker was Ἱπποτρόφος, which, in the attested manuscript variant Ἱπποστρόφος, would differ from <'rstrpws> by only one consonant (ه > ϑ). According to the witness of Diogenes Laertius, whose manuscripts attest both variants, Hippotrophus was the title of a dialogue falsely attributed to Plato. The loss of the dialogue, however, precludes further considerations.²⁶

The second possibility, which Ryssel put forward, is that Erostrophus was a misreading of the proper name Aristippus. If Ἀρίστιππος was written as <'rstypws> as Ryssel believes, the names <'rstypws> and <'rstrpws> would differ by only one letter. This possibility, however, finds some ground beyond the similarity in the name since Aristippus of Cyrene is a historical figure related to Socrates.

Aristippus was born in Cyrene in c.435 BCE and, according to Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius, as a youth was captivated by the fame of Socrates and moved to Athens to associate with the philosopher. After Socrates's death, Aristippus moved on to establish his own philosophical school, which was later known as Cyrenaic.²⁷

According to Diogenes, Aristippus composed a number of philosophical works, some of which had the form of dialogue, but it is especially remarkable that he is the speaker in at least two dialogues with Socrates that are reported by Xenophon.²⁸ The question is, then, whether the *Erostraphus* may have originally featured Socrates and a young Aristippus of Cyrene, the traditional founder of the Cyrenaic School. On the grounds that Aristippus of Cyrene never dealt with the issue of the soul in his writings, however, in 1958 Gabriele Giannantoni suggested caution in understanding the dialogue as a work related to the Cyrenaic school, and strongly rejected the possibility that the *Erostraphus* might be a work composed by Aristippus himself. In fact, as is shown above, its contents bring together different philosophical traditions and point to a later date.²⁹

While there is little common philosophical ground between Erostraphus and the historical Aristippus of Cyrene, some passages in the dialogue nonetheless reveal a link between the two figures at a literary level. Diogenes Laertius reported that 'Aristippus was by birth a citizen of Cyrene and, as Aeschines (of Sphettus) informs us, was drawn to Athens by the fame of Socrates (κατὰ κλέος Σωκράτους)';³⁰ and a remarkably similar scenario is described in the exchange that opens the dialogue:

Erostraphus replies: 'O Socrates, your reputation and my will have brought me to you with trepidation, because, out of all men who at present live in the world, you spend your entire life in wisdom and calm, and without desire. My coming to you, Socrates, is because I know that the entire world is amazed at your wisdom. Those who know you rejoice in praising you, and those who do not know you hear about your name and are very much amazed at your deeds.'³¹

In both texts, someone is led to Socrates on account of the philosopher's renown. The similarity may indicate that the author of the *Erostraphus* and Diogenes Laertius ultimately relied on the same literary tradition about Aristippus's travel to Athens, although the fame of Socrates as an attraction for young philosophers may well be a literary topos (see e.g. D.L. 6.10 about Antisthenes).

A stronger link between the two traditions, however, comes from Plutarch. In the *De Curiositate*, Plutarch describes the circumstances in which Aristippus encountered Socrates:

Aristippus, when he met Ischomachus at Olympia, asked him by what manner of conversation Socrates succeeded in so affecting the young men. When Aristippus had gleaned a few odd seeds and samples of Socrates' talk, he was so moved that he suffered a physical collapse and became quite pale and thin. Finally he sailed for Athens and slaked his burning thirst with draughts from the fountain-head, and engaged in a study of the man and his words and his

philosophy, of which the end and aim was to come to recognize one's own vices and so rid oneself of them.³²

Plutarch used the simile of the *fountain-head* to refer to Socrates (διψῶν καὶ διακεκαυμένος ἠρύσατο τῆς πηγῆς), and made specific mention of Socrates's *words and philosophy* (τοῦς λόγους αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν φιλοσοφίαν). The same two details are reported in the short narrative section that closes the *Erostraphus*:

Erostraphus rejoiced in the demonstrations about which Socrates instructed him, and they were not lacking anything from the time when they were put into the mind of Erostraphus except for the wisdom of Socrates, who, in his discourse and in his opinion, resembled two never-failing springs of water which steadily produce abundant water – not in vain or for destruction, but, wherever these waters were going, they were benefiting and bringing forth produce and fruit. In like manner, Socrates' discourse to Erostraphus and to those who were there was not wearisome because it was useful and an eternal and never-ending profit. It was beneficial to those who listened as the water benefits the earth that is fertile and ploughed by the hands of farmers and workers that do not disdain its cultivation. So was the discourse of Socrates very useful for everybody who was listening.³³

Thus, the closing narrative passage of the *Erostraphus* presents important similarities with the anecdote reported by Plutarch about Aristippus. In particular, it seems to elaborate on the same simile about Socrates's teachings as springs of water, and it likewise expresses the excellence of Socrates's rhetoric as well as his philosophy. The remark about the lack of vices that characterises the behaviour of Socrates in the Plutarchan passage is instead taken up in Erostraphus's words at the beginning of the dialogue, reported above. The question, then, is whether both Plutarch and the author of the *Erostraphus* were relying on the same tradition about Aristippus of Cyrene.

Another element might be adduced in favour of the identification of the literary traditions about Aristippus of Cyrene and the character of our dialogue. The *Phaedo*, Plato's dialogue on the immortality of the soul, contains an important remark about Aristippus. To the question whether Aristippus was present at the dialogue, Phaedo, the reporter of the actual dialogue, responded negatively, for Aristippus – he said – was in Aegina at the time (59C).³⁴ Thus, according to the tradition, Aristippus did not attend the dialogue on the soul between Socrates and his followers. Conversely, the *Erostraphus* is configured as another dialogue by Socrates on the soul and on the question of its immortality. If *Erostraphus* should be identified with Aristippus, then one suspects that the *Erostraphus* may have been a deliberate attempt to write a pseudo-epigraphic philosophical dialogue on the soul relying on the same literary traditions of which Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius were aware. If this was the case, the composition of the *Erostraphus* would not be too dissimilar from the enterprise underpinning a similarly instructional and pseudo-epigraphic work in the same manuscript, the pseudo-Aristotelian

On the Universe, in which Aristotle instructs the young Alexander the Great in cosmology.

It is arguable, however, that the choice of Aristippus for the composition of a dialogue with Socrates was not the most obvious one. Xenophon presented Aristippus as an advocate of hedonism whom Socrates harshly admonished, and, in addition, Aristippus is elsewhere represented as actively seeking luxury and amusement as the greatest goals in life.³⁵ Conversely, the representation of <'rstrpws> in the dialogue is, overall, positive.³⁶ The young individual greatly admired Socrates and aimed to pattern his life according to Socrates's moral teaching. There is the possibility, then, that the origin of the dialogue should be sought in the milieu of those authors who presented a generally positive view of Aristippus.³⁷

A less controversial and more sympathetic view of Aristippus is found in Plutarch's *Moralia*, where Aristippus is often depicted as an exemplary figure; in Galen, who quotes Aristippus favourably; and in a pseudo-epigraphic collection of letters composed between the first and the third centuries CE, the *Socratic Epistles*, whose anonymous authors made use of Plutarch.³⁸ Most of the *Epistles* are allegedly written by Socrates or by his pupils, and their real authors drew on existing literary traditions about Socrates and his followers. It is especially remarkable that Aristippus is often mentioned in the letters, and he is either the author or the addressee of a significant portion of them (eight out of thirty-three). In particular, the alleged author of *Socratic Epistle* 16, the very Aristippus, explains that he was not present at Socrates's death and that he heard about the event when he was in Aegina, the same scenario that might have been the basis of the composition of the *Erostraphus*. It seems possible then that the author of the dialogue *Erostraphus* relied on literary traditions about Socrates and Aristippus that circulated in the first centuries CE and are attested in Plutarch, in Diogenes Laertius and in the *Socratic Epistles*.

Conclusion

The *Erostraphus* is a Syriac philosophical dialogue dealing with the nature of the soul, and, in all likelihood, was translated from a Greek original that remains so far unidentified. The contents of the dialogue show that the author brought together different philosophical traditions, among which one can identify Platonic, Stoic and Galenic components. It is thus unlikely that the dialogue was composed earlier than the late second century CE. Also, if the otherwise unidentified name Erostraphus is in fact a misreading of Aristippus, as Ryssel originally conjectured, the dialogue might be understood as an instance of late antique pseudo-epigraphic literature that presents a sympathetic view of the Cyrenaic Aristippus, and its author seems to be aware of literary traditions that are attested in Plutarch, Diogenes Laertius and the *Socratic Epistles*.³⁹

Notes

- 1 Ramelli, *Bardaisan*; Drijvers, *Book of the Laws*; Teixidor, *Bardesane*; Bowersock, *Hellenism*, 31–2 for the similarity with Plato, *Republic*, 327AB; Eusebius of Caesarea,

- [illegible]

- 36 The only exception is the remark about the lack of Socratic wisdom in *Erosthophus* mentioned in the passage above.
- 37 For the origins of apparently very different traditions on Aristippus, see McKirahan 'The Socratic Origins', 377–82.
- 38 Plutarch, *Moralia* (4F), 80C, 439E, 462D, 469C, 516C, 750D, and fr. 42.5 and 179.93, ed. Sandbach; Maximus of Tyre, *Or.* 1.9, ed. Trapp; Galen, *De Indolentia*, 39–43, ed. Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, and Pietrobelli with Kaufman, 'Galen', 277; Malherbe, *Socratic Epistles*, 27–9.
- 39 I am grateful to the editors of the volume, to the organizers and the audience of the conference, and to Glen Bowersock, Sebastian Brock, Christopher Jones, David Taylor, Lucas Van Rompay, Donald Russell, Christian Wildberg, and Jessica Wright for the discussion of different aspects pertaining to the *Erosthophus*.

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3 The rhetorical mechanisms of John Chrysostom's *On Priesthood*

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Among many other things, John Chrysostom 'did dialogue'. He lived an ascetic life for some time, and then moved to the urban milieu and became an important figure as a deacon and priest in Antioch until he was elected bishop in Constantinople.¹ This eventful life saw Chrysostom involved in conflict in the religious arena in situations that demanded the development and practice of developed skills in dialogue. It is my intention here to analyse how the rhetorical mechanisms of dialogue worked in the composition of Chrysostom's *On Priesthood* as part of a wider strategy that contributed to defining the figure and functions of a priest in the changing and evolving setting of the last decades of the fourth century CE. I also want to survey how such rhetorical mechanisms were deployed in other works by Chrysostom with the intention of engaging in contemporary concerns and debates within Christianity. I intend to show by this means that *On Priesthood* should not be read as an isolated work but as a dialogue intimately intertwined with other works in which Chrysostom disseminated his agenda and defended his position.

A brief introduction to Chrysostom's *On Priesthood* needs to begin by stating that this is a multilayered work in which the rhetorical mechanisms of dialogue function at different levels in order to deal with the different problems that Chrysostom wanted to address. Probably written in the last years of the 380s,² this dialogue reports the conversation between Chrysostom and a close friend, Basil,³ and begins with John's apology for avoidance of priestly ordination, a responsibility that Basil could not evade. In the first book, the starting point is a doctrinal disquisition, based on a dialogical scheme, on the requirements and functions of those who aspired to devote their lives to ministerial duties. Chrysostom excuses his own refusal by resorting to the widely used rhetorical *topos* of the *recusatio*, since, according to his own testimony, his unworthiness made him unfit to meet the expectations of the sanctified nature of priesthood,⁴ contrasting his position with that of Basil, who reluctantly accepted ordination. Books II and III deal with moral blemishes that damaged the office of priesthood, and with the virtues that a priest or a bishop (Chrysostom's terminology is ambiguous; he mainly uses the term ἱερωσύνη, which may refer to both)⁵ should display. In books IV and V, Chrysostom devotes long passages to the instruction of rhetorical and oratorical skills, an ability that he deemed essential when preaching and engaging in

dialogue in religious contexts. Finally, book VI reprises and encapsulates themes already discussed, more specifically the question of how far the ideal priest should attend to secular issues while retaining the divine essence of the ministry. Failure to do so would affect those Christians under his guidance; thus, Chrysostom concludes, the responsibility of the priest is greater when compared to that of other Christian figures, such as monks.⁶

The numerous questions and issues involved in this dialogue demanded an appropriate treatment suited to each subject. Chrysostom's rhetorical prowess allowed him to deal with each issue specifically, as the argumentation of *On Priesthood* was shaped according to several rhetorical and literary subgenres. This strategy, for example, justifies the apologetic nature of the work, and the appearance throughout the dialogue of vocabulary indebted to judicial rhetoric. The apologetic tone of Chrysostom's intervention is a constant presence, taking the form of forensic expressions with two main purposes, namely narratological (these constitute rhetorical transitions when Chrysostom changes topic) and thematic (these contribute to developing Chrysostom's defence of his own refusal to be ordained).⁷ Another literary mode used by Chrysostom is the autobiographical, as shown in the pathetic *ēthopoïia* in which Chrysostom makes his mother beg him not to retreat and leave her alone (I.5), a passage that constitutes a fine example of the theme of a persuasive *mater dolorosa* afraid of being abandoned. Other rhetorical forms and devices find their place in the work, such as the brief encomium adorned with *synkriseis* (I.8–9) that allows Chrysostom to strengthen his ambiguous defence of the convenience of using the concept of 'deceit' or 'fraud' (ἀπατή).⁸ The pedagogical directions on the instruction and skills that future priests should develop are represented by several catalogues of the virtues and vices that are at the core of Chrysostom's conception of a good or bad priest (e.g. II.8; III.9). Finally, another rhetorical device with which John concludes his dialogue consist of an *ekphrasis* replete with *enargeia* that epitomises his veneration for the office of the priesthood by likening his soul to a young farmer who is amazed when shown an impressive army ready to charge.⁹ As a result of using all these rhetorical devices and subgenres, Chrysostom's *On Priesthood* is a good example of epideictic rhetoric, as Colombo pointed out a century ago,¹⁰ and the final goal of the dialogue was to develop a 'dimostrazione d'una tesi, precisamente come un qualsiasi discorso epidittico'.¹¹

This composite shows that there was great fluidity in the use of the literary mechanisms of different forms of rhetoric in the preparation of Chrysostom's dialogue, a work whose hybrid nature makes for difficult reading if one aspires to reach clear-cut conclusions.¹² However, such a rhetorical analysis would be meaningless if we did not ask why Chrysostom chose to give shape to his ideas in the form of a dialogue rather than as a homily – a genre of which he was a master. In my opinion, what made Chrysostom choose the dialogue form for *On Priesthood* was that this genre reflected the dynamics of a religious context in which opposing opinions on the nature and function of the priest or the bishop – as we will see below – were debated. As Peter Van Nuffelen argues,¹³ it would be misleading to think of the complex religious sphere of late antiquity in terms of simple

dichotomies, especially when it comes to debates about institutions such as the priesthood, in relation to which oxymoronic constituents needed to be reconciled. Late antique dialogues constituted a literary form capable of coordinating and incorporating a wide variety of complex issues so as to integrate different opinions in the search for a social (and, in this case, religious) equilibrium. Note, for instance, the definition of dialogue in the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, a late antique text that compares dialogue with the universe (15.1–2):

We must now mention the reasons why Plato used this literary form. He chose it, we say, because the dialogue is a kind of cosmos (ὁ διάλογος οἷον κόσμος ἐστίν). For in the same way as a dialogue has different personages each speaking in character, so does the universe comprise existences of various natures expressing themselves in various ways.¹⁴

This analogy helps us to understand that, in late antiquity, dialogue was seen in terms of a literary universe in which the aim was to reconcile different types of characters and arrange the different constituents of a group by means of consensus. In the late antique cultural milieu, dialogue was thus perceived to be a tool that could harmonise and categorise different elements without nullifying their identity, a capacity that, as we will see, suited Chrysostom's view of the multilayered nature of priesthood in his attempts to reconcile the different duties of priests and bishops in the late fourth century.

It comes as no surprise that the dialogue *On Priesthood* was modelled on the Platonic dialogues. Their immense influence was still felt in late antiquity. For example, Socrates Scholasticus tells us (*HE* 3.16) that when the Emperor Julian forbade Christians from teaching classical *paideia*, the Christian Younger Apollinarius, 'who was well trained in eloquence, expounded the Gospels and apostolic doctrines in the way of dialogue, as Plato among the Greeks had done'.¹⁵ However, Apollinarius's work was a failure and, after Julian's death, it fell into oblivion. The genre of dialogue in late antiquity, it seems, needed to demonstrate something more than loose Platonic reminiscences. In the case of Chrysostom's dialogue, the final product is, so to speak, a new story in an old skin. Its main similarities with Plato lie in the literary form of the work: the use of vocatives, the question-and-answer process and the digressions scattered throughout the work add an unmistakable Platonic air. However, as Malingrey pointed out, there are some features that tell against the dependence of Chrysostom's work on Plato.¹⁶ She emphasises, for example, the dramatic tone used by both John and Basil, who were both personally involved in and concerned with the subject of the dialogue.¹⁷ This is not to say that Plato's dialogues had no bearing on their historical context, but that the interventions of Chrysostom and Basil reveal a close relation to the issue at stake.¹⁸

A number of programmatic passages show that *On Priesthood* meant to address real situations in which dialogue was a key concept whose practice became a *sine qua non* at different levels.¹⁹ The first book of *On Priesthood*, for instance, is replete with Basil's reprimands to John for encouraging him into the priestly

office while John secretly resisted. Basil laments Chrysostom's evasive attitude and accusations of vanity (κενοδοξία) against his friend but also reproaches him with a *litotes* (I.6): 'I do not now accuse you of any of these things, or reproach you for the lonely position in which you have placed me by breaking off those conferences from which we often derived no small pleasure and profit'. Basil regards Chrysostom's allusion to deceit (ἀπατή) as the element that cut the bonds of their friendship and that ended their 'conferences' (συνόδους), thus depriving him of the fruits (κάρπῳ is the term used) provided by such συνόδους, and severing the consensus that both shared in deciding when to retreat to an eremitic life and when to enter the ministerial career. Their friendly relationship, their *philia*, therefore, would become fruitless in the absence of the conversations and dialogues held during their meetings.

The deployment of dialogic elements was particularly necessary in the religious sphere, since for Chrysostom persuasion was a strategy that contributed both to identifying Christians and differentiating them from those who exerted coercion. At II.3, for instance, the legal authority and enforcement of secular judges is negatively compared to the persuasive and rhetorically dissuasive attitude of Christians when correcting their peers. This explains why John constantly recommends the teaching of the Scriptures in conjunction with the learning of rhetorical skills. He vehemently (note the insistent parallelism of the original *enumeratio*: τοῦτο ὄργανον, τοῦτο τροφή, τοῦτο ἄέρων κρᾶσις ἀρίστη· τοῦτο ἀντὶ φαρμάκου, τοῦτο ἀντὶ πυρός, τοῦτο ἀντὶ σιδήρου) reminds his audience of the importance of the teaching and learning of *logoi* (IV.3): 'this is the one instrument, the only diet, the finest atmosphere. This takes the place of physic, cautery and cutting'. In fact, priests are encouraged by John not to concern themselves with those who pay no attention to words (V.4: ἀλογώτατοι).

Books IV and V of *On Priesthood* continue to insist on the importance of rhetorical skills in inter-religious and intra-religious debates in order to confront and argue with non-Christian and heterodox opinions. Here Paul emerges as the paradigm,²⁰ a figure who is compared to the god of eloquence, Hermes, after defeating Jews and pagans in the rhetorical arena (IV.7):

When, therefore, both before working miracles and after, St. Paul appears to have made much use of argument, how can anyone dare to pronounce him unskillful, whose sermons and disputations (ἀπὸ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι) were so exceedingly admired by all who heard them?

Likewise, Chrysostom's ideal priest ought to know how to develop dialectical skills when debating and refuting the 'exaggerations' (ἀμετρία is a concept frequently used by Chrysostom) and improper questions of heretics (IV.5). 'Why should anyone', Chrysostom wonders, 'describe the silly chatter of our own people? For these are not less than the attacks upon us from without, while they give the teacher even more trouble'. 'Silly chatter' translates the Greek verb ἐρεσηλέω, a word used by Plato in dialectical contexts (*Rep.* 545e, *Lg.* 885c) with the intention of denigrating those who engaged in mocking and irrelevant conversations.

In using the term ἐρεσχλέω, Chrysostom wants to draw our attention to the role of dialogue in the search for intra-religious consensus: while he encourages the learning and practice of rhetorical skills conducive to religious equilibrium, other Christians waste their time with unreasonable and disproportionate arguments (that is, ἀμετρία) and in unsubstantial conversations (ἐρεσχελία). Such passages demonstrate the extent to which Chrysostom prescribed the practice of dialogic and rhetorical strategies in religious debates and denounced those for whom words were entertainment.

Chrysostom thus aimed to reframe the rhetorical mechanisms of dialogue for religious purposes in order to facilitate a broader argument as part of the negotiation process of the multifaceted functions of the priesthood in the post-Constantinian era. This was one of the main achievements featured in John's portrait in the *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*, a work that provides an important testimony to his reputation soon after his death. In chapter 10, we are told that he was admired for his 'acuity in public debates'.²¹ In another chapter on the events during his first months as bishop of Constantinople, the author asserts that there was a period of peace and concord between the eastern and western churches thanks to Chrysostom's intervention (19):

After a long time the dispute of the Fathers about their communion with each other was resolved with those in the West and those throughout the East and those in between the two [sides] being in communion with one another. And just like an angel descending from the sky as a bestower of concord, so this amazing man brought together the whole world, making the many churches truly one, when the one church had formerly been divided into many parts.

Regardless of the veracity of this episode,²² the passage shows that the resolution of conflict by dialectics or dialogue was a common ideal in the late antique religious milieu and was also applied to the process of making Chrysostom a literary character after his death.²³

Although envisioned as a polyphonic work, Chrysostom's *On Priesthood* is mainly concerned with the ways in which mundane issues and civic duties had been integrated into the office of priesthood at a time when Christian figures were becoming more important in city life and benefitting from legal measures conducive to their social advancement.²⁴ Following Gregory of Nazianzus's writings on the creation of the ideal Christian figure (arguably the most important ideological influence on Chrysostom's *On Priesthood*),²⁵ John was interested in the modelling of a *vir sanctus Nicenus dicendi peritus*. By contrasting a list of the desirable virtues of a priest with a catalogue of moral flaws, among which corruption and immorality stood out, he aimed to reconcile the divine nature of ministry with the risks deriving from the civic duties that priests and bishops had taken on (either officially or unofficially) by the second half of the fourth century.²⁶ Modern scholarship has shown how this new construction or institutionalisation was carried out: secular power was consolidated by the inherently charismatic authority of the Christian figure, in a symbiotic relationship modelled on significant Scriptural figures. These Christian figures had become more important in the late antique

city, as several laws in the *Codex Theodosianus* show: they represented communities and cities (an activity traditionally carried out by non-Christians),²⁷ possessed legal authority (*CTh* 1.27.1), were entrusted with the distribution of food and donations (*CTh* 11.27), and enjoyed financial and legal immunity (*CTh* 11.39.8; 16.16.15). These were precisely the duties that Chrysostom tried in his dialogue to harmonise with the religious nature of the priesthood.

According to Chrysostom, some of these new duties caused his peers to succumb to the temptations of vanity (κενοδοξία), a concept that acts in *On Priesthood* together with ‘envy’²⁸ as a hyperonym of all evils, to the extent that he did not accept his ordination though fear of yielding to them. Mention of vanity (κενοδοξία) gives rise to a long catalogue of the moral and ethical faults into which priests frequently fell.²⁹ These charges were not groundless and numerous sources (both Christian and pagan) confirm that they were not isolated instances. Ammianus Marcellinus (27.3.13–14), for example, denounces the tendency to ostentation and the deadly struggles within the Church due to political intrigues. Basil of Caesarea did not hesitate to proclaim that (*Ep.* 112) ‘gone is the dignity of the priesthood’. Similarly, Gregory of Nazianzus’s orations are especially critical of the corruption that he claims had become an endemic evil within Christianity.³⁰ Even official documents such as the canons of councils (see, for instance, canons 1, 2 and 8 of Serdica on the rise of bishops’ personal profits by illegitimate means – mainly bribery), and Christian texts such as the *Libellus Precum* (a document from the 380s sent to Theodosius, Arcadius and Valentinian II) abound in mentions of the faults listed by Chrysostom.³¹

John did not address all these flaws and faults individually. Instead, he devoted the content of books IV and V of *On Priesthood* to teaching dialectical and dialogic strategies in order to provide preachers and bishops with an efficient tool to help Christian figures not be overcome by these flaws, consolidate their authority within their sees and churches, and negotiate in the ecclesiastical and theological arena.³² Dialectic, in fact, was part of the educational curriculum as long as it was free of contentiousness, and learning dialectic was encouraged in the Christian milieu in order to distinguish true arguments from heretical ones.³³ Chrysostom’s basic principle in this context is summarised in his *On Priesthood* as follows (IV.5):

In short, to meet all these difficulties, there is no help given but that of speech, and if any be destitute of this power, the souls of those who are put under his charge (I mean of the weaker and more meddlesome kind) are no better off than ships continually storm-tossed. So that the Priest should do all that in him lies, to gain this means of strength.

As in many other ways, Paul was Chrysostom’s role model. The example and description of the divinely inspired oratory of Paul in book IV allowed Chrysostom to recast the purposes of classical rhetoric and the nature of dialogue (IV.6):

Now were I to insist upon the polish of Isocrates, the weight of Demosthenes, the dignity of Thucydides, and the sublimity of Plato, in any one bishop,

St. Paul would be a strong evidence against me. But I pass by all such matters and the elaborate ornaments of profane oratory; and I take no account of style or of delivery; yea, let a man's diction be poor and his composition simple and unadorned, but let him not be unskilled in the knowledge and accurate statement of doctrine.

Thus, John concentrates on two interrelated aspects in his efforts to equip priests and bishops with dialogic strategies and rhetorical mechanisms that could aid the search for religious consensus and assist them in the process of assimilation of civic duties to religious office. First, the message sent by a priest or a bishop had to rely on Scriptural foundations. In a metaliterary passage, he supports this statement by quoting 2Tim 3:16–17: 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work'. This strategy could be considered a reformulation of Cato the Elder's *rem tene verba sequentur* (*Libri Ad Marcum Filium*, frag. 15), a phrase that we might recast as *fidem tene verba sequentur* and apply to the process of Christianisation of rhetoric. Second, books IV and V (which Lochbrunner has described as a *directorium homileticum*)³⁴ seek to teach a type of rhetoric capable of integrating Scriptural knowledge into an appealing prose style. Even though he acknowledges that Paul's silence was more powerful than the words and prayers of the men of his day due to Paul's (IV.6) 'bare presence', Chrysostom was well aware of the demands of Christian audiences, who had been criticised by Gregory of Nazianzus, since (*Or.* 42.24) 'they look for orators, not for priests'. John was conscious of the need to (V.2) 'produce the doctrine which is with grace seasoned with salt', that is, he acknowledged that the Christian orator could not be a careless writer if he did not want to endanger the reception of his message or to weaken his position in a debate. John had to deal with a recurrent contradiction in the Christian oratorical and rhetorical milieu: writing in a plain style without boring one's audiences. It is not uncommon to find late antique sources that bear testimony to what we might call 'Philostratean bishops':³⁵ that is, Christian elite figures who, according to literary sources, sought to convey their moralistic and religious messages through the rhetorical and sophistic tropes that occupied so many of the philosophical rhetors in Philostratus's *Lives of the Sophists*.

Chrysostom himself was the subject of a literary discussion between God and the devil on those grounds. In the *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*, the devil replies to God's complimentary description of John with these words (27):

He talks loftily, but when the time comes, his actions will not match his words, while those to whom he speaks hear but do not heed him and applaud as if they accept [his words] but they only applaud and this is the only effect of his teaching on them.

Such an imputation is repeatedly refuted by the anonymous author, who considers John's sermons as nourishment to the souls of his flock (45).

The theoretical codification of dialogic elements in Chrysostom's treatise on priesthood was not mere rhetorical adornment but became a real player in a late antique religious arena in which factionalism and competition were commonplace.³⁶ The corpus of homilies that Chrysostom composed on the occasion of the Riot of the Statues in Antioch in 387 provides us with a good example in the description of the embassy of bishop Flavian on behalf of Antioch to appease the emperor Theodosius's wrath after the incident. In Chrysostom's narration of this episode, bishop Flavian engages in dialogue with the emperor, as a result of which Theodosius granted pardon to the city (*hom.* XXI). Flavian persuaded the emperor thanks both to the practice of moral virtues and the dialogic strategies practised by the figure of Paul as represented in *On Priesthood*, that is, by a combination of a pious attitude and oral skills.³⁷ It could be argued that the discussion between bishop and emperor was a fictional dialogue, added to Chrysostom's homily for literary purposes. This would have some weight if we overlooked the historical context in which the homily was composed. As Emmanuel Soler pointed out, John's *Homilies on the Statues* are integral to the intra-religious propaganda that emerged in the context of the internal schism from which the see of Antioch had been suffering since the first quarter of the fourth century and which had split the Antiochene church into three main groups (one Arian and two Nicene, led by Paulinus and Meletius respectively). Chrysostom, an important partisan of the Meletian faction,³⁸ narrated the decisive dialogue between the emperor and Flavian, who at this time was the leader of this faction, as part of his dialectical strategy of supporting the Meletian party in intra-religious discussions with Paulinus's group. Thus Flavian's dialogue with Theodosius was embedded in a larger dialogic strategy aimed at presenting Flavian as a reliable *speculum episcopi* in a context of religious competition. In this sense, Illert has suggested that part of the criticism contained in *On Priesthood* was inspired by and aimed at the supporters of Paulinus's side, thus portraying Flavian as an ideal representative of the values described in Chrysostom's dialogue.³⁹

In conclusion, a better understanding of John's dialogue will emerge if we read it with the changing discursive context in mind (more specifically, contemporary concerns within Christianity and within the religious Nicene orthodoxy of Antioch). For Chris de Wet, this work relates to identity concerns and presents the priest as an intermediary figure, a negotiator between earthly and celestial issues.⁴⁰ This also implies that the priest had to reconfigure and then reconcile two different spheres by negotiation and dialogue. To that end, dialogue was the most appropriate literary form. In this case, as Malingrey indicates, John's *On Priesthood* presents a clever *mise en scène*.⁴¹ The choice of dialogue offered Chrysostom numerous narratological advantages that allowed him to insert embedded speeches and rhetorical devices that met contemporary concerns. In fact, from a formal and purely literary point of view, late antique writers regarded dialogue as a suitable and flexible form to accommodate different discourses. As the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Plato* indicates (15.36–38), one of the advantages of dialogue is its ability to encompass the opinion of different participants:

His object is to make us pay attention to the contents by the very variety of the speakers; otherwise, if it is always one and the same person teaching us,

we might, so to speak, doze off . . . In a conversation, however, people are kept awake by asking and being asked.

In conclusion, the rhetorical mechanisms of dialogue provided Chrysostom with a flexible and polysemic literary form able to balance polyphony and equilibrium.

Notes

- * I would like to express my gratitude to J. Fernández Ubiña, P. Ubric Rabaneda, R. Fowler, and J. Campos who read a previous version of this work. I would also like to thank the organizers and the audience of the conference for their input and feedback. This work is part of the research project 'La teatralización de la retórica y el establecimiento de un canon en la literatura griega y latina en la antigüedad tardía (s. III–V)'.
- 1 For Chrysostom's biographical details see Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 1–54; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 3–16.
- 2 On the date of composition, see De Wet, 'Priestly Body', 3–4; Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose and John Chrysostom*, 168–71; Malingrey, *De Sacerdotio*, 10–13; Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 44–5.
- 3 On the identity of Basil, see Lochbrunner, *Über das Priestertum*, 26–8; Malingrey, *De Sacerdotio*, 8–10. For the historicity of the episode, see Liebeschuetz, *Ambrose and John Chrysostom*, 166–7.
- 4 Gregory of Nazianzus shared this concern: Elm, *Fathers of the Church*, 164–5, 188; Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 43. For Chrysostom's use of the *topos*, see Elm, 'The Diagnostic Gaze', 92; Hartney, *John Chrysostom and the Transformation*, 26–8.
- 5 Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 42; Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 150.
- 6 In two of his main works (*A Comparison between a King and a Monk* and *Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life*), John considered monasticism to be a complementary (even propaedeutic) institution that would reinforce the role of the church as a whole, while priests carried a greater responsibility since they were in charge of large numbers of people.
- 7 See, for instance, Chrysostom, *On Priesthood* I.7,8; II.7.
- 8 E.g. that doctors and priest resort to *ἁπατή* to heal their patients. On the role of *synkrisis* in the work, see Colombo, 'Dialogo', 187–9; Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 145.
- 9 Chrysostom, *On Priesthood* VI.12: 'Let there be an armament composed of infantry, cavalry, and marines, and let a number of triremes cover the sea, and phalanxes of foot and horse cover most of the plains, and the ridges of the mountains, and let the metal of their reflect the sunshine, and the glitter of the helmets and shields be reflected by the beams which are emitted from them; let the clashing of spears and the neighing of horses be borne up to the very heavens, and let neither sea nor land appear, but only brass and iron in every direction. [. . .] Then let someone suddenly seize some young lad, one of those brought up in the country, knowing nothing but the use of the shepherd's pipe and crook; let him be clad in brazen armor, and let him be led round the whole camp and be shown the squadrons and their officers, the archers, slingers, captains, generals, the foot and horse, the spearmen, the triremes and their commanders, the dense mass of soldiers in the ships, and the multitude of engines of war lying ready on board'. English translations of Chrysostom's dialogue are taken from Stephens, *On Priesthood*.
- 10 Colombo, 'Dialogo', 187.
- 11 The rhetorician Hermogenes, *Id.* 386–9, considered Plato's dialogues to be the literary model for epideictic speeches.
- 12 On this issue, see Malingrey, *De Sacerdotio*, 13–15.
- 13 Van Nuffelen, 'End of Open Competition', 150–2.

- 14 Translations taken from Westerink, *Anonymous Prolegomena*. On the historical background of this text, see Motta, 'Visible Cosmos'. For earlier literary criticism on Plato's use of dialogue, see Diogenes Laertius, 3.48–55.
- 15 Translation taken from Zenos, *Ecclesiastical History*.
- 16 Malingrey, *Jean Chrysostome*, 15–22.
- 17 Concerning the autobiographical aspect of the dialogue, see Malingrey, *De Sacerdotio*, 19–21.
- 18 This was a feature shared by other Christian dialogues, such as Gregory of Nyssa's *On the Soul and Resurrection*.
- 19 See Garsten's observations about persuasion and dialogue (*Saving Persuasion*, 3): 'Persuasion is worthwhile because it requires us to pay attention to our fellow citizens and to display a certain respect for their points of view and their judgments. The effort to persuade requires us to engage with others wherever they stand and to begin our argument here, as opposed to simply asserting that they would adopt our opinion if they were more reasonable'.
- 20 On Chrysostom's use of the figure of Paul, see Mitchell, *Heavenly Trumpet*.
- 21 Translations from Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*.
- 22 It has been suggested that the chronology of this episode was intentionally displaced, see Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*, 50 n. 57.
- 23 In this context, Basil of Caesarea's *Letter*, 135 is a very interesting document on the Christian views of the advantages of dialogue as a literary form. See also Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 3–4.
- 24 Gilliard, 'Senatorial Bishops'.
- 25 On the influence of Gregory's treatise on Chrysostom's *On Priesthood*, see Elm, *Fathers of the Church*, 17–18.
- 26 Gaudemet, 'Regards du pouvoir'; Lizzi, *Potere episcopale*; De Wet, 'Priestly Body', 7–10.
- 27 McLynn, 'Curiales into Bishops'; Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 183–8.
- 28 De Wet, 'Priestly Body', 7.
- 29 *On Priesthood* III.9: 'Wrath, despondency, envy, strife, slanders, accusations, falsehood, hypocrisy, intrigues, anger against those who have done no harm, pleasure at the indecorous acts of fellow ministers, sorrow at their prosperity, love of praise, desire of honour (which indeed most of all drives the human soul headlong to perdition), doctrines devised to please, servile flatteries, ignoble fawning, contempt of the poor, paying court to the rich, senseless and mischievous honours, favours attended with danger both to those who offer and those who accept them, sordid fear suited only to the basest of slaves, the abolition of plain speaking, a great affectation of humility, but banishment of truth, the suppression of convictions and reproofs, or rather the excessive use of them against the poor, while against those who are invested with power no one dare open his lips'.
- 30 See especially Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 26.16, 42.22.
- 31 See *Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom*, 44–5 for his austere way of life contrasted with the luxurious lifestyle of other bishops.
- 32 We should not forget that the content of the homilies was considered to offer practical knowledge to help churchgoers in their daily lives, see Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication*, 28–9.
- 33 See, for instance, Basil of Caesarea's *Letter*, 2: 'One should take heed not to be boorish in conversation, but to ask questions without contentiousness (ἀφιλονεικώς), and answer without self-display: neither interrupting the speaker when he is saying something useful, nor being eager to interject his own words for the sake of ostentation, but observing moderation both in speaking and in listening'; trans. Deferrari, *Letters*.
- 34 Lochbrunner, *Über das Priestertum*, 124.
- 35 See, for instance, Eusebius of Caesarea, *HE* 7.29–30; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or.* 2.41, 42.24; Socrates Scholasticus, *HE* 4.7, 7.29, 7.32.
- 36 Van Nuffelen, *War of Words*.

- 37 See *Hom.* XXI.5–6. Another example of Chrysostom's praise of this combination of piety and oral skills can be found in his *Homily on Saint Meletius*, 6–7; *Homily on Saint Eustathius*, 7, 10.
- 38 On the role of John and Diodore of Tarsus in the Meletian Schism, see Sterk, *Renouncing the World*, 142–4.
- 39 Illert, *Johannes Chrysostomus*, 18–21. See also Lochbrunner, *Über das Priestertum*, 95–104; Soler, 'L'utilization'.
- 40 De Wet, 'Priestly Body', 12–15.
- 41 Malingrey, *De Sacerdotio*, 20.

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4 Literary distance and complexity in late antique and early Byzantine Greek dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos*

Patrick Andrist

When the orthodoxy of Nicaea was enforced by the Emperor Theodosius I in the last decades of the fourth century, the Christian production of polemical dialogues in Greek already had a long tradition behind it,¹ including texts such as the *Ad Theopompum* attributed to Gregory Thaumaturgus,² the *De Resurrectione* by Methodius of Olympus or the *Adamantius*, probably by one of his disciples. As far as dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos* are concerned, one can recall, among several texts, the well-known *Dialogue against Trypho* of Justin or the lost *Dialogue* by Aristo of Pella. However, no matter how interesting this early production might be, it is just a small avant-goût of what came next. Still, within the limits of the dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos*, at least fourteen texts in Greek written between the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the ninth have been preserved, at least partially, as illustrated in Table 4.1 below. This list would be much longer if one included the various remodellings of these texts within their tradition, or the many other now-lost texts one knows about because they are mentioned in other works or can be inferred as sources of extant texts.³

In the present chapter, three of these dialogues will be examined, not from the point of view of their theological content, but from the perspective of their literary handling by the authors, focusing on aspects such as the staged characters, the contextual information given in the titles or the use or non-use of the prologue and conclusion by the author in order to set up a fictional context and build various kinds of literary distance between his characters and the readers. This will also be the occasion to make a few remarks about two extra questions: the much debated problem of the relation between these texts and the thicker context of real-life discussions and debates in the Byzantine empire, and, in the conclusion, to reflect briefly on the question of the potential public performance of these texts.

Dialogus Athanasii et Zachaei (AZ) – CPG 2301 – c.380–420

The first text is the *Dialogue of Athanasius and Zacchaeus (AZ)*, which was first edited and published by Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare in Oxford in 1898. As

Table 4.1 The main late antique and early Byzantine Greek dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos* (sixth to ninth centuries)

<i>Dialogus Athanasii et Zacchaei</i> (c. 380–420)
Dialogues in the <i>Acta Philippi</i> (s. IV?)
Dialogue in the <i>Acta Silvestri</i> (s. V?)
<i>Dialogus Timothei et Aquilae</i> (s. VI?)
<i>De gestis in Perside</i> (s. VI)
<i>Anonymus dialogus cum Iudaeis</i> (= Anonymus Declerck; s. VI?)
<i>Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati</i> (c. 634)
Leontius of Neapolis, <i>Apologia</i> (s. VII 1/2)
<i>Trophaea Damasci</i> (c. 674–688)
Hieronymus Hierosolymitanus, <i>Dialogus de sancta Trinitate inter Iudaeum et Christianum</i> (s. VII ex.–VIII in.?)
<i>Dialogica polemica antiiudaica</i> (olim <i>Dial. Papisci et Philonis cum monacho</i> ; s. VIII?)
<i>Disputatio Anastasii</i> (s. VIII)
<i>Anonymus dialogus in actione V concilii Nicaeni II lectus</i> (s. VIII?)
Theodore Abū Qurrah, <i>Dissertatio X</i> (s. VIII–IX)

argued in my thesis, this text was most probably produced by a moderate Apollinarian in Alexandria around 380 and 390, or a little later.⁴ Its title and beginning read as following:⁵

A Dialogue of Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria, with Zacchaeus, a Torah Teacher of the Jews.

¹ ZACCHAEUS: You Christians are deceived. First, because you think that there are other gods beside the one and only God, when the Scripture everywhere says that there is one God. ‘Hear,’ it says, ‘Israel, the Lord your God is one’ (Deut. 6:4). And again, ‘I am God first and I am after these things. And apart from me there is no God’ (Isa. 44:6). And again, ‘Hear, my people, and I will speak to you; Israel and I will testify to you. Israel, if you hear me, there will not be a recent god among you, nor will you worship another’s god. For I am the Lord your God, who led you out from Egypt’ (Ps. 80:9–11). But also there are countless other passages like these. And, second, you are deceived because you say that the Messiah is God, and that he is subject to suffering, and that he was born from a woman. When you hear this, are you not ashamed?

² ATHANASIUS: Do you then desire that I will show to you that formerly it was written in the Scripture that the Messiah is also God, and they are not two Gods? And then, that the Messiah is subject to suffering, and is born from a woman, and also that it is not a shame to those who call on Him?

At the very beginning of the text, the readers learn something about the identity of the characters: Athanasius, who stands for the archbishop of Alexandria. This also clearly suggests a place and a time for the geographical setting, namely Alexandria in the fourth century. Zacchaeus, who is a νομοδιδάσκαλος among the Jews, while the Armenian tradition calls him simply ‘a Jew’. However, these pieces of information are found in the title only, and never appear directly in the text. If the title is lost, the identity of the characters is also lost, except for their bare names, which are also given in the heading of each reply; even there, in some chapters in the Armenian manuscripts, the characters are anonymously introduced by the expressions ‘the Christian’ or ‘the Jew’. Strikingly, they never call each other by their name. In such a situation, it would be easy for anyone to convert this text into a dialogue between two other persons.

Furthermore, there is no introductory prologue. The text begins directly with an attack from Zacchaeus, *ex abrupto*, like a piece of theatre, and goes on with a reply from Athanasius. In reality, these two initial replies, which define the topic of the discussion – or at least the first part of it – play the role of a prologue. During the debate, there is no mention of an audience, a third party or a judge; nor is there any reference to any fictional environment. The characters are presented first and foremost as two specialists who discuss theology. As such, there is no chronological or literary distance between the characters and the readers, who directly witness their dispute. The end of the dialogue, preserved in the Armenian version only, is compact as well as abrupt, and does not add any contextual information.⁶

¹³⁰ ZACCHAEUS: You have convinced me from all points of view that our fathers acted impiously in crucifying the Messiah. It has appeared from what you have said that he was their expectation, but the Jews forfeited their hope. What, therefore, must I do to be saved?

ATHANASIUS: Repent and be baptized unto the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, so that you may hearken unto David’s words: ‘Blessed are they whose transgressions have been remitted and whose sins have been hidden’ (Ps. 32:1).

In one sentence, Zacchaeus expresses his new belief in the Christian Saviour, and in one sentence, Athanasius urges him to be baptised. Nevertheless, there are no other sentences or any ‘postlude’ confirming that Zacchaeus actually became a Christian and was baptised. This contextual nakedness does not amount, however, to a lack of literary qualities. The text is fairly well written and balanced; the author uses humour and irony with his characters, mainly with the Jew, who also evolves in his understanding of the Christian faith and his attitude toward Athanasius. As far as these formal characteristics are concerned, *AZ* belongs to a small group of ten polemical dialogues (see Table 4.2).⁷

All these dialogues begin *ex abrupto* and do not present any literary context; all of them are found in the tradition of Athanasius, even though they are sometimes attributed to other authors, such as Maximus Confessor; and all of them

Table 4.2 The ten ‘naked’ polemical dialogues in the pseudo-Athanasian tradition (end of the fourth/first half of the fifth century)

Against the Arians

De sancta Trinitate dialogi I–II

Disputatio contra Arium

Against the Macedonians

Dialogi I–II contra Macedonianos

De sancta Trinitate dialogus III

Others

De sancta Trinitate dialogi IV–V (against the Apollinarians)

Dialexis Montanistae et orthodoxi (against the Montanistes)

Dialogus Athanasii et Zacchaei (against the Jews)

can be dated in the last decade of the fourth or the first half of the fifth century. Moreover, there are reasons to envisage that these techniques of writing dialogues concentrating on arguments and ideas might ultimately be related to the School of Didymus in Alexandria and more or less directly reflect an academic way of debating in this intellectual circle.⁸

This tendency to ‘depersonalise’ the characters in literary dialogues seems to have enjoyed some success in scholarly circles of the time, as exemplified by two other contemporary texts. In the prologue of his ‘teaching’ dialogues *De sancta Trinitate*, composed between 412–420 according to the editor,⁹ Cyril of Alexandria explains why he uses the form of the dialogue and the letters A and B instead of the name of the protagonists:¹⁰

Dial. 1, praef. . . . J’en suis donc venu à écrire le présent livre et c’est de nouveau pour toi, Némésinos, très studieux frère, que j’ai élaboré ce traité sur la sainte et consubstantielle Trinité. Rassemblant les idées relatives à chaque question, comme qui dirait selon le genre et l’espèce, nous avons composé le corps entier de ce livre de sept petites dissertations. Nous y adressons la parole à Hermias, hautement qualifié qu’il est pour cela par son extrême érudition et ses enquêtes continuelles en pareille matière. Et le style est détendu, celui d’un échange de demandes et réponses entre deux personnages; au premier est assigné la lettre A, au second la lettre B. Vu, en effet, la subtilité très grande des questions, pour que les demandes et les réponses aillent toujours à construire et détruire avec acuité la proposition scrutée, l’introduction de personnages est devenue une nécessité. Il faut donc prendre soigneusement garde aux lettres placées au début. De la sorte, nous conserverons sans confusion et dans un ordre parfait les concepts que nous aurons découverts, ainsi que l’ordonnance du livre tout entier et son efficacité.

Curiously, on the formal level, Cyril ‘depersonalises’ his characters to the point of introducing them just by ‘A’ and ‘B’. On the other hand, in this prologue, he wants

the readers to know that he is staging himself speaking to Hermias, and in the text, including the first address in the dialogue, it often happens that 'A' calls 'B' by his name;¹¹ besides, the first replies of the dialogue build a warm atmosphere between the two friends, in a way which recalls many philosophical dialogues in the tradition of Plato. The editor also notes this paradox, and understands the use of the letters primarily as a tool so that the replies can be better distinguished in the codices, contrary to some of the Plato manuscripts of the time.¹² More significantly, the author feels the need to justify the uses of a literary dialogue as a necessary way to make the 'dissertation' understandable. These dialogues are clearly not historical conversations, but pure literary devices.¹³

A comparable explanation is also to be found in the Latin *Consultationes Zachaei et Apolonii*, composed in the years 408–410, or slightly later, probably in the milieu of travelling monks.¹⁴ In the prologue, the author explains why he chose the form of the dialogue:¹⁵

Praef. 2 Il nous a donc semblé bon d'exposer un grand sujet, bien que dans un style simple, et d'expliquer des choses que beaucoup ont dites certes avec plus d'éclat, mais d'une manière dispersée, en une sorte de traité d'ensemble de ce que nous croyons, et, en nous servant d'un personnage qui interroge et d'un autre qui répond, de faire successivement des consultations sur les matières à contradictions. 3 C'est pourquoi, afin que le paganisme ne se plaigne pas d'être jugé par avance comme s'il était absent, et, comme le dit un auteur illustre, « pour ne pas mettre trop souvent dis-je, ou dit-il », nous avons décidé de recourir à un philosophe du paganisme.

In order to convince the pagans, the author decided to gather a series of otherwise dispersed arguments, and use the dialogical form for stylistic reasons. Again, the choice to set up an opponent and debate with him is purely a technique to discuss the arguments in a more fitting way.

In spite of the ten texts mentioned above, the production of naked theological – or academic in any sense – dialogues was never very popular, and indeed, it did not last very long. Already during the same period, one finds dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos* included within the novelistic adventures of Christian heroes such as the Apostle Philip or the Pope Silvester. In these more detailed stories, the settings and the characters are of course presented at length. For example, in the *Acta Philippi*,¹⁶ one twice finds one-day public disputes between the Apostle and the Jews, with a lot of details about the circumstances as they happened, as well as many anecdotes and non-argumentative details about the disputes themselves. Read in the context of the *Acta Philippi*, these public disputes are chapters or episodes of the edifying drama of which they are a part.¹⁷ Similarly, in the *Acta Silvestri*, Helena congratulates her son Constantine on his leaving the cult of idols, and urges him to become a Jew; Constantine organises a debate between Silvester and twelve rabbis and, as any reader knows from the beginning, these are defeated by the bishop of Rome.¹⁸ Many

years later, the dialogue of Silvester begins to circulate independently from the rest of the *Vita*.

Interestingly, none of these texts – whether the naked dialogues or the novelistic ones – can be considered a faithful mirror of some kind of real-life discussion. In the case of *AZ*, this fictional dimension appears even more clearly by the facts that the author heavily draws on previous literary sources, including a now-lost dialogue *Adversus Iudaeos* on the one hand, and, on the other hand, that the figure of the Jew, so easy to defeat and convince, is quite unrealistic.¹⁹

Dialogus Timothei et Aquilae (TA) – CPG 7794 – sixth century?

As far as the fictional setting is concerned, *AZ* can be contrasted with the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila (TA)*, preserved in various recensions, among which the *recensio longior* is most probably closer to the original text, which probably dates from the sixth century.²⁰ Its title reads:²¹

A Dialogue between a Christian and a Jew whose names are Timothy the Christian and Aquila the Jew, which took place in Alexandria in the days of Cyril, the most holy Archbishop of Alexandria.

Not only are the names of the characters specified, but also geographical and chronological information is given. The dialogue is set in Alexandria at the time of Cyril. Importantly, this information can also be found within the dialogue, particularly clearly at the end of it:²²

⁵⁷¹ But the Jew remained speechless for about one hour, saying nothing.

⁵⁷² Then the Christian said to him: ‘Have you understood everything, O man of God?’

⁵⁷³ The Jew said: ‘I have understood.’

⁵⁷⁴ The Christian said: ‘So what do you think about this?’

⁵⁷⁵ The Jew said: ‘Truly you have persuaded me in every way that he is God of Gods and Lord of Lords and King of Kings and that our fathers sinned greatly when they laid hands on him. ⁵⁷⁶ Therefore, now, O man of God, tell me what I should do to be saved’ (Acts 16:30).

⁵⁷⁷ The Christian said: ‘If you believe with all your heart and all your power and all your strength and all your understanding, arise, be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord Jesus (see Acts 8:38; 22:16). ⁵⁷⁸ May you, along with those who are listening, hear from the sacred king and prophet and patriarch David as he says: ‘Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered’ (Ps. 32:1).’

⁵⁷⁹ And having said this, the Christian stood up because *the crowd* was clamoring for the believer; they said: ‘The faith of the Christians has won’ and were blessing the king and the angelic bishop.

- ^{57 10} But the Jew arose and fell at the feet of the Christian and lifted up his voice in crying and bitter lamentation and was saying to the Christian: 'The Lord God will require my soul from your hands, if you do not make me a Christian.'
- ^{57 11} The Christian then raised him up and brought him to the most holy *Bishop Cyril*, and the Christian explained to him all that had happened. ^{57 12} And the bishop says to him: 'Child, it is necessary for the laboring farmer to first partake of the fruits (2Tim. 2:6). You have labored; you take first his fruit' ^{57 13} And when he said: '*I am not a clergyman*,' the bishop quickly entered the church, and having given the peace, ordains him as a *deacon*. ^{57 14} And again, he gave the peace and *makes him a presbyter* and he gives him the remaining elders and deacons for the service of the liturgy. ^{57 15} And they give him a *parchment of written supplications and prayers* to be followed.
- ^{57 16} And the most holy presbyter *Timothy* departed along with the rest of the presbyters and deacons went to the place nearby where *Aquila* was waiting, and they took him and led him into the church. ^{57 17} And they performed all the order and he baptized him in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They then renamed him Theognostos. ^{57 18} He then partook of the sacred mysteries and became a recipient of the Holy Spirit. He, who was at one time a Jew, now became a Christian through God. He, who was formerly a wolf, now became a sheep of Christ.
- ^{57 19} The presbyter Timothy then took him into his own house and they were continually glorifying together the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ^{57 20} To whom be all honor and strength for ever and ever. Amen.'

It is easy to see the legendary dimension of this fanciful ending. But functionally, even without the title, one can still find information on the characters within the dialogue, including where and when the protagonists are supposed to interact, both at the end and in the prologue at the beginning of the text – the presence of a prologue is one more striking difference with *AZ*.²³

- ^{1 1a} When the manifestation of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ had taken place throughout all the inhabited world and when the prophetic oracles were being fulfilled and the apostolic teachings were shining forth, faith in the holy and same-substanced trinity was being established both for everyone and everywhere in the whole inhabited world. ^{1 1b} Intemperance was being expelled and virtue was being administered, brotherly hatred was being condemned and hospitality was being multiplied, the devil was being shamed but God was being glorified. ^{1 2} And when the demon who hates the good saw God being glorified and worshipped, and saw his own works destroyed and spit upon, ^{1 3} he was very irritated and entered into a *certain Jewish man named Aquila* . . .

- ¹⁵ Now, this Aquila was going around in the synagogues and teaching the divine scriptures, saying this: ‘The one whom the Christians now worship is not the Messiah, but he was a man even as we are . . .’
- ²¹ Then, on one day, *Aquila* was sitting in *the Jewish Quarter* and was speaking about these matters to the Jews who were gathering there. ²² And while he was saying these things, *a Christian named Timothy* arrived. And when he heard him saying these things, he made the seal in Christ, that is the sign of the cross on his forehead and his heart. He then said to Aquila, ‘Are you willing to sit together in some place and search out together this issue from the Holy Scriptures?’
- ²³ And the Jew said: ‘Yes, if you wish to, we can do that.’
- ²⁴ And the Christian said: ‘When do you wish?’
- ²⁵ And the Jew said: ‘Tomorrow.’
- ^{31a} And it happened that on *the next day*, when they had sat down in *a place called Dromos, with a great audience assembled*, that the Jew then said . . .

The prologue is an impersonal description of the context in which the debate supposedly takes place: the names of both protagonists are given again, as well as the quarter where they first meet and the place where they discuss. This prologue is ‘impersonal’ because, contrary to many philosophical or Christian dialogues and many Greek novels, there is no narrator who presents himself as a witness to the discussion and places the setting, as we will also find in our third example. The author even knows what happened behind the scenes (cf. 1.3). As in a movie, it is an ‘off-stage presentation’ of a drama recounted in the past tense. Like the Book of Job and many Platonic dialogues, the discursive part is framed with a novelistic prologue and ending. Both contribute to building a distance between the idealised days of Bishop Cyril and the time of the reader (the dialogue is thus a later production). Both are also literary codes, telling the readers that this text is assuming a literary fictional dimension.

Even though the interaction between the main speaker and the crowd is also occasionally mentioned in the central body of the text, including at times a description of Timothy’s emotions in a somewhat idealised and dramatic tone (see 4.9–12), this one-day discussion is fairly ‘static’, and there is no noteworthy action, except for the small closing scene we have just read: otherwise, they talk and, at the end, Aquila is baptised.

In the *recensio brevior* of *TA*, which is most probably a later reworking,²⁴ Timothy is declared to be a priest in the title. In this slightly different introduction, he is sent by Cyril of Alexandria to neutralise the teaching of Aquila. The ‘postlude’ informs us that this happened on January 25, but the year is not mentioned. That day, many people were baptised by Cyril himself; then they fasted during three days and three nights. As in *AZ*, the author of *TA* draws a good deal on literary sources, while the Jewish character does not make a realistic argumentative effort; like *AZ*, *TA* is very removed from the historical debates of its time.

TA can be contrasted with the possibly contemporaneous *Anonymus dialogus cum Iudaeis* (*ADI*). This dialogue begins with a ‘personal’ prologue, in which the narrator explains what his thoughts and meditations were when he met a Jew and started discussing with him. However, neither the name of the Jew nor the Christian are given, not even in the headings of the replies, where the protagonists are simply called ‘Jew’ and ‘Christian’. However, starting with chapter six, the text loses its dialogical form, and the author puts into the mouth of the Christian what the Jew might reply.²⁵ The text becomes a long and forceful paraenetic speech, and there is no ‘postlude’. For this reason, the achievement of the author, in terms of imitating a dialogic situation, is imperfect, when compared with *AZ* or *TA*.

***De gestis in Perside = Disputatio de religione (GP) – CPG*
6968 – sixth century, second half**

As Vincent Déroche argued and as a recent thesis by Pauline Bringel in Paris has confirmed, the original text of the *De gestis in Perside* must be dated in the second half of the sixth century, and in any case after 536,²⁶ and is thus also roughly contemporaneous with *TA*. The structure of this text, consisting of a series of four disputes during four non-consecutive days, shows an extra level of complexity. Each day begins and ends with a short discussion with the king:

- 1 The first debate has to do with pagan oracles about Christ’s birth. In reality, it is a peaceful discussion between the bishops and Aphroditianus, a top-ranking pagan philosopher.
- 2 In the second debate, the enchanter Horicatus is defeated by the bishops.
- 3 In the third debate, two Jews talk with Aphroditianus, then with the bishops and become Christians.
- 4 This creates problems within the Jewish community, and the last discussion is a debate between the two converted Jews together with their new friends on the one hand, against the other Jews on the other.

There are various titles in the manuscripts, which sometimes mention the author, but disagree about his name. More importantly, these titles do not contribute to the fictional setting more than the text itself, as one very clearly sees in the prologue already:

¹ When Arrhinatus was king of Persia, and second after him was Pasargarus, who held the highest rank of the highest officials in authority, and third was Diocles, who managed the satrapies and provinces, and Aphroditianus, holding the rank of chief cook there arose a dispute in this land between pagans and Christians concerning Dionysarus and Philip, the writers of history. The pagans champion Dionysarus, the Christians Philip.²⁷

The plot takes place in Persia, under Arrhinatus, who is a fictional king, like most of the characters in the text, as Bratke and Bringel show.²⁸ The prologue thus provides the reader with a literary place, time and context.²⁹

- ² And when many had been agitated, the King gathered together all the bishops who were in those lands, numbering more than 100, and not a few archimandrites; among these they urged me also to come along – the only one from Roman territory; for all [these others] were from those regions.

This time, the prologue is an ‘I’ prologue, as in many dialogues, for example *ADI* above, or the *De Anima* of Gregory of Nyssa. The narrator, who should not automatically be confused with the author, presents himself as a witness to the events he reports. This *mise en scène* contributes to the creation of a chronological distance, but a moderate one, because the presented events happened during the lifetime of the narrator, who is in turn directly speaking to the readers.

The narrator does not give his name but says he is a ‘Roman’ archimandrite (ἐκ Ρωμαίων = ‘out of the Roman empire’). At this date, this means he is a Greek, and could be a justification for why the text is written in Greek even though the events took place in Persia. This mention of the nationality of the narrator also builds a degree of unusual but moderate geographical distance too, because it did not happen in a country where the anticipated Greek readers – such as you and I – live, but is still in a known part of their world.³⁰

- ³ And when they had been assembled, the King brought together the Rabbis of the Jews, saying to them: ‘Since some have said that the fine sayings of the pagans preach about Christ, and some dispute this, become judges of the two sides, and tell me the truth accurately. For I trust neither pagans nor Christians one-sidedly, when they are speaking in defense of themselves. Therefore, laboriously unfolding every idea in the divine book, and devoting all your thoughts to it, neither favoring the one group nor the other, report them to the unconquerable authority of my hands – knowing that if you are hindered by any other order, I will immediately see to the destruction of you all.’

And they said: ‘We shall not say anything except what is right for Your Heavenly Divinity to hear. But if it seems good to you, righteous masters, make the all-wise and noble Aphroditianus [act as] judge for the two parties. . . .’

The initial dispute is between pagans and Christians about two historians, and the king calls upon the Jews to resolve it. Nevertheless, they refuse. Why?³¹

- ⁴ But the Jews were putting this man forward as a trick, so that he might trample underfoot the Christians’ name. This Aphroditianus was a pagan

to whom no one's mouth was able to render an account. And there was no small struggle impending for us, so as not to be defeated by this man. For all the hairs [on our heads], if they became mental processes, would not be able to disentangle one simple thought of his.

The Jews in the story have an agenda. But one quickly perceives that the author also has an agenda, which has primarily to do with the Jews, to which the two last disputes are devoted. However, unlike in most dialogues, not all the Jews are converted at the end of the last dispute. Here is how Aphroditianus concludes the debate:³²

⁸¹ . . . And as regards all the pagans and Christians and Jews: We boast in a name only. And so, brothers, whether you live as Christians or live as Jews, do not destroy the common bond of peace. Let us honor each other with love, and strive after the uninterrupted good things of heaven; and let us hate the division of opposites. Embrace each other, everyone, with a view to being brought to unity by divine grace.

⁸² And the man received grace to persuade both parties to be reconciled with each other, as the party of Simon and the others cast itself at the feet of the party of Jacob, asking them not to abandon their ancient friendship. But worship [of God should proceed] as any individual wished, with sincere love remaining [between all]. And after bidding each other farewell, as they ought, and kissing the bishops' feet, giving thanks to God, praising the king at length, and saying the Alleluia in Hebrew together, they departed from each other. And Jacob, Pharas, and 60 [other] souls were baptized. But the others remained in the section of Simon, and they were called 'Christianomerites.' Aphroditianus urged both to honor Providence, because "this has greatly honored us."

One is surprised by the irenic tone. Thanks to Aphroditianus, the dispute is settled gently. Even though the other Jews are not converted, they are reconciled with their previous coreligionists, and freedom of religion for all people is proclaimed. The text ends, on § 83, with the official conclusive decree by the four judges, and on § 84, with a eulogy of Philip of Side.

Does this lack of general conversion have something to do in the view of the author with the unusual geographical distance mentioned above? The underlying message could be understood as demonstrating that this kind of peaceful and respectful achievement in religious disputes is possible, even though it is to be found not in Byzantium but outside the borders of the Empire. This text is the only known literary example of such an irenic and tolerant position. The only other known case of a fictional encounter between a Jew and a Christian, where the Christian fails to convert his opponent, but still remains on friendly terms with him, is the non-polemical (at least on the formal level) *Confessio Theodosii*.³³ In its oldest recension, datable to the seventh century, the main story, about Jesus

being ordained a priest of the Temple, is framed by a peaceful dialogue between the two characters, including a positive statement toward Judaism and some understanding for Theodosius, who does not become a Christian.

In the *De gestis*, the narrative sections are not simply meant to provide a context for a ‘one-shot’ discussion. The story lasts for several days, even though is constructed around four one-day debates. Though no high literary level is reached, there is something like a plot and some dynamics in the story, such as one finds in a novel.

These kinds of multiple discussions in front of a judge are not new. One recalls, for example, the fourth-century dialogue *Adamantius (De Recta in Deum Fide)*, probably by a disciple of Methodius of Olympus who refuted five adversaries – two Marcionites, a disciple of Bardesanes and then two Valentinians³⁴ – in five disputes in front of a pagan judge. The frequent use of traditional material, as shown by Bringel, again makes it impossible to imagine that the disputes in the *De gestis* faithfully report real-life discussions. The text is a patchwork and Bringel even envisages a progressive composition of the work.³⁵

Two examples of this more complex kind of dialogue dating from the seventh century can also be mentioned.³⁶ One is the *Trophaea Damasci* (c.674–688),³⁷ whose literary location and date are given in its title: ‘Trophées de la divine et invincible église de dieu et de la vérité, remportés sur les juifs à Damas, la métropole aimée du christ et magnifique, la vingtième année de Constantin soutenu par Dieu, notre empereur après Constantin, au mois d’août de la 9e indiction’.³⁸ It records the four discursive victories of an anonymous monk, in four non-consecutive days of discussion, against Jewish opponents, each time supposedly more knowledgeable in the Bible than the previous ones. The first dispute is secret, but for the second discussion, the protagonists are no longer alone: ‘Nous nous rassemblons donc pour discuter, selon les conventions, nous et les chefs des Juifs; une nombreuse foule de peuple est présente: des Juifs, des Grecs, des Samaritains, des hérétiques, des Chrétiens, car le lieu est public et tout à fait en vue’.³⁹ At the end of the four days, the Jews are ridiculed, but only some of them are baptised.

The second example of a complex series of dialogues, the *Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati* (c.634),⁴⁰ is even more like a novel. It is a story built as a series of fictional dialogues between Jews who have been forcibly baptised; one of them is convinced that what happened is a good thing, and he persuades the other Jews, who then convert others. There are several changes of place and characters, and a few scenes with some action.

Fictional dialogues in an historical context of real-life debates

When it comes to evaluating the relation of these texts to the real discussions between Jews and Christians of the time, it is again difficult to reach a definite conclusion.⁴¹ As shown above, the settings and the characters are mostly unrealistic, and the authors drew heavily on sources already in circulation. Thus, the question is not whether these texts faithfully mirror a ‘real-life’ situation – they clearly do not – but how it is possible to have so many unrealistic literary dialogues at a

time when real debates were common, and, as a result, how many real-life elements can be recognised in this overall fictional canvas. A well-known story in chapter 172 of the *Pratum Spirituale* by John Moschus may help to solve this puzzle:⁴²

- ¹⁷² Concerning this master Cosmas the lawyer, many people told us many things; some one thing, others another. But most people told us a great deal. We shall write down what we saw with our own eyes and what we have carefully examined, for the benefit of those who chance to read it. He was a humble man, merciful, continent, a virgin, serene, cool-tempered, friendly, hospitable, and kind to the poor. This wondrous man greatly benefited us, not only by letting us see him and by teaching us, but also because he had more books than anybody else in Alexandria and would willingly supply them to those who wished. Yet he was a man of no possessions. Throughout his house there was nothing to be seen but books, a bed and a table. Any man could go in and ask for what would benefit him and read it. Each day I would go in to him and I never entered without finding him either reading or writing against the Jews. It was his fervent desire to convert the Hebrews to the truth. For this reason he would often send me to some Hebrews to discuss some point of Scripture with them, for he would not readily leave the house himself.

There is no reason not to consider this story a reliable witness for Cosmas and John Moschus. It is not a cliché, and it does not match any narrative pattern in the *Pratum Spirituale*. It pictures a very interesting situation, where real debates between Jews and Christians do take place in Alexandria, and where there is a man, Cosmas, obsessed with converting the Jews: he reads and writes a great deal about this topic, but himself has no (or very little) experience of these debates, because he does not like to leave his house. He sends other people to do so. Where did Cosmas draw his materials for his writings? Probably John and others told him something about their last disputes and the arguments of the Jews, but the text does not tell us so. Instead, it stresses that Cosmas owned many books on this topic, and used to read them. In this context, the chances are clearly that it was these books rather than real debates that mostly influenced his writings. This is a common attitude of Byzantines, who tended to privilege knowledge from the past and from books against a direct study of reality. In the case of Cosmas, the resulting texts could well have been something like *AZ*, *TA* or *ADI*, with a weak connection to the historical context but a strong link to literary traditions and focus on the content of the debate. But, of course, this is not the only possible explanatory model for the origin of *AZ* or *TA*.

Paradoxically, but not surprisingly, most of the preserved literary dialogues do not convey a faithful image of the not-so-infrequent public debates. The conclusion is inescapable: one cannot use these texts to reconstruct any real-life discussion. Nevertheless, these texts were no ‘floating comets’ either, and one also expects to find some connections to real life, as for example in a discussion about

Ps. 118:27⁴³ in the so-called *Dialogica polymorpha antiiudaica*.⁴⁴ Since the links to historical reality can vary greatly between one literary dialogue and another, each text must be analysed *per se*.

Conclusion

Even though there is no satisfactory statistical basis on which to reach any secure results, the examples presented above illustrate how the dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos* tended to evolve toward more complex literary constructions, with a transition period in the sixth century. This evolution and variety in the more or less successfully implemented formal approaches by the authors of the dialogues surveyed witness to the wealth and vitality of the dialogical form in the first centuries of the Byzantine empire, as argued by Averil Cameron.⁴⁵ This ability to include long discussions in fairly coherent meaningful and complex fictional contexts seems to come to a temporary end in the eighth century, as witnessed by the *Dialogica polymorpha antiiudaica*, before being rediscovered later.

The possible public performance of these dialogues is also a related question, which cannot be addressed in depth here. Of course, among the surveyed dialogues, *AZ*, which has no prologue and presents a series of back-and-forth questions and answers, would *a priori* be fairly easy to perform; but the lack of action in this dialogue as in many others would eliminate the distinction between a stage performance and a public reading, except for the fact that there are two rather than one readers or actors. In the manuscripts, the title and the frequent red-coloured headings of the replies could be interpreted as a practice aiming at making life easier for a two stage-reader situation. However, the manuscripts never show any positive indications of a public reading or staging. On the other hand, this *mise en texte* is very similar to the practice in some manuscripts of *Questions and Answers*. It is simply a tool to allow an ordinary reader to follow the text more easily, and can be functionally compared to modern editions of the polemical dialogues, where each reply begins on a new line after a larger-than-usual interlinear space.

In the *Doctrina Iacobi*, the prologue ends with the following words, ‘now be quiet, pay attention to what is said, this is the edifying and moving story of what happened’,⁴⁶ after which the dialogue begins. Can this sentence be interpreted as an argument in favour of the idea this dialogue was performed? It certainly fits well with the idea of a public reading or staging situation. On the other hand, the same prologue can be found at the beginning of the *Vita sanctae Pelagiae*, whose staging is anything but probable.⁴⁷ The prologue is in fact a kind of standard reusable one, and its potential for pointing at a public performance is rather limited.

As illustrated by *AZ*, whose formal peculiarities are best explained if they are put into a broader literary context of polemical dialogues from the same period, but outside the realm of the dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos*, the analysis of the literary aspects should be extended both in the direction of contemporaneous non-*Adversus Iudaeos* Greek dialogues and that of contemporaneous non-Greek *Adversus Iudaeos* dialogues, for example dialogues in Latin and Syriac. Such an extended enquiry would certainly shed more light on the peculiarities (or the lack

thereof) in the historic evolution of the Byzantine *Adversus Iudaeos* dialogues in general, and would also help us to understand the literary achievement of the author of each individual dialogue.

Notes

- 1 On literary dialogues in Byzantium in general, and the dialogues *Adversus Iudaeos*, see as an entry point Averil Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*. See also *ibid.*, ‘Flights of Fancy’; Déroche, ‘Forms and Functions’; Külzer, *Disputationes*; various papers in Morlet, Munnich and Pouderon, *Les dialogues Adversus Iudaeos*.
- 2 Even though its dialogic character is weak; see Hoffmann, *Dialog bei den christlichen Schriftstellern*, 59–67 at 62: ‘... lässt sich von einem Dialog im echten Sinne nicht reden’. Andrist, ‘Dialogue d’Athanasie’, 436: ‘De fait cependant, elle consiste en quelques longs exposés du maître’.
- 3 For some examples of texts not included here, see Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’; Külzer, *Disputationes*, 129–64.
- 4 On this text, see Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’, 276; Varner, ‘In the Wake’, 224–6; Külzer, *Disputationes*, 105–12; Lahey, ‘Evidence for Jewish Believers’, 591–5; Andrist, ‘Dialogue d’Athanasie et Zachée’; *ibid.*, ‘Protagonistes égyptiens’, 92–121. On the date of *AZ*, see Andrist, ‘Dialogue d’Athanasie et Zachée’, 313–486; *ibid.*, ‘Protagonistes égyptiens’, 92–3.
- 5 *AZ*, ed. Andrist, 27: Ἀθανασίου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἀλεξανδρείας λόγος πρὸς Ζακχαῖον νομοδιδάσκαλον τῶν Ἰουδαίων.
 - 1 ΖΑΚΧΑΙΟΣ· “πλανᾷσθε οἱ Χριστιανοὶ πρῶτον ὅτι νομίζετε καὶ ἐτέρους θεοὺς εἶναι παρὰ τὸν ἓνα καὶ μόνον θεόν, τῆς γραφῆς πανταχοῦ λεγούσης ἓνα εἶναι θεόν· ἄκουε φησὶν Ἰσραὴλ, κύριος ὁ θεός σου εἰς ἔσθι· καὶ πάλιν· ἐγὼ θεὸς πρῶτος καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ ταῦτα· καὶ πλὴν ἐμοῦ οὐκ ἔστι θεός· καὶ πάλιν· ἄκουσον λαός μου καὶ λαλήσω σοι Ἰσραὴλ καὶ διαμαρτυροῦμαι σοι· Ἰσραὴλ, ἐὰν ἀκούσης μου, οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν σοὶ θεὸς πρόσφατος, οὐδὲ προσκυνήσεις θεῷ ἄλλοτρίῳ. ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰμὶ κύριος ὁ θεός σου, ὁ ἀναγαγὼν σε ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου, καὶ ἄλλα μυρία ταῦτα· δεύτερον δὲ ὅτι καὶ θεὸν λέγετε τὸν Χριστόν, καὶ παθητὸν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐκ γυναικὸς ἀκούοντες, οὐκ αἰσχύνεσθε.”
 - 2 ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΟΣ· “θέλεις οὖν σοὶ πρότερον δεῖξω ὅτι θεὸς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἐν τῇ γραφῇ γέγραπται καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶ δύο θεοί, καὶ οὕτως ὅτι καὶ παθητὸς ὁ Χριστὸς καὶ ἐκ γυναικὸς καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν αἰσχύνῃ τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις αὐτόν”; trans. Varner, 23.
- 6 *AZ*, ed. Tayec’i, 234: ¹³⁰. ΖΑΚΧΑΙΟΥ. “ῤαυλινεցուցեր զիւ ամենայն ուստեք, եթէ հարբն մեր ամպարշտեցան զթրիստոս խաչելովն: Քանզի երեւեցաւ յաւացելոցդ՝ եթէ նա էր ակնկալութիւնն, և կորուսիւ շրեայքն զոյսն իւրեանց: Չհ՞նչ ապա պարտ է ինձ առնել զի պարեցայց:”
 ԱԹԱՆԱՍԻՈՍ ասաց. “Ապաշտեալ մըրտեցիր ի Զայր և յորդի և ի սուրբ Դոգիւն, զի և դու լուիցես ի Դաւթ. երանելիք՝ք՝ որոց թողան անօրէնութիւնք, և որոց ծածկեցան մերք:” trans. Varner, 85.
- 7 Andrist, ‘Pseudathanasianische Dialoge’.
- 8 *Ibid.*, 361.
- 9 De Durand, *Dialogues sur la Trinité*, 40–1. See also Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 49.
- 10 Cyril of Alexandria, *De sancta Trinitate*, ed. and trans. de Durand, 127–9: *Dial. 1, praef.* (383c–384b) . . . κατὰ γένος δὲ ὥσπερ ἦτοι κατ’ εἶδος τὰς ἐφ’ ἐκάστω τῶν ζητούμενων συνενεγκόντες ἐννοίας, ἐν ἐπτά λογιδίοις τὸ σύμπαν τοῦ βιβλίου συντεθείκαμεν σῶμα· φιλολογωτάτῳ δὲ ὄντι λίαν καὶ φιλοπευστοῦντι τὰ τοιαῦδε συχνὸς τῷ ἐπιεικεστάτῳ Ἑρμείᾳ προσπεφωνήκαμεν. καὶ ἔστι μὲν ἀνεμένος ὁ λόγος, ὥς πρὸς πεῦσιν δὲ καὶ ἀπόκρισιν διὰ δυοῖν προσώπων ἐρχεται· καὶ τοῦ μὲν πρώτου

- τὸ Α προτέτακται στοιχεῖον, τοῦ δὲ δευτέρου τὸ Β. ἐπειδὴ γὰρ πολλή τις ἄγαν ἐν τοῖς ζητούμενοις ἐστὶν ἡ λεπτότης, ἵνα ταῖς ἐρωτήσεσι καὶ ταῖς ἀποκρίσεσιν αἰεὶ τὸ βασανιζόμενον κατασκευάζεται τε καὶ ἀνασκευάζεται πικρῶς, ἀναγκαῖα γέγονεν ἡ τῶν προσώπων εἰσκομιδὴ. παραφυλακτέον οὖν ἀκριβῶς τὰ προτεταγμένα αὐτῶν στοιχεῖα. ἀσύγχυτον γὰρ οὕτω καὶ ἐν τάξει τῇ παναρίστη κειμένην τηρήσομεν τὴν τῶν ἐννοιῶν εὕρεσιν, καὶ τὴν τοῦ παντός βιβλίου σύνταξιν τε καὶ δύναμιν.
- 11 See, e.g. *De sancta Trinitate*, 385b, 386b, ed. de Durand, 130, 132.
- 12 *De sancta Trinitate*, ed. de Durand, 359–60. In the introduction, de Durand (32–7) also notices that the adversaries of Cyril, who are Arians, are not clearly mentioned, with the exception of ‘Arius’.
- 13 This usefulness of the dialogical form is also asserted by Cyril in the newly found prologue of his *De adoratione et cultu in spiritu* (CPG 5200), cf. Crawford, ‘Preface and Subject Matter’, 157–9.
- 14 For the date, Feiertag, *Questions d’un païen*, 1:16–31; see also Feiertag, *Consultationes Zacchaei*, 64–93, 126–35, 143–5. On this text, see also Andrist, ‘L’instrumentalisation’, chap. 3d.
- 15 *Consultationes Zacchaei*, ed. and trans. Feiertag, 76–9: *Praef. 2 Visum est ergo rem magnam, licet tenui stilo, condere et clarius quidem a multis, sed sparsim dicta, in corpore quodam credulitatis aperire, atque introducta sciscitantis respondentisque persona, paulatim consultationes de contradictionibus facere. 3. Itaque, ne sibi uelut absenti praeiudicatum gentilitas quereretur et, ut ille ait, ne inquam et inquit saepius interponeretur, placuit gentilitatis adhibere philosophum.*
- 16 On this text, see Bovon, ‘Actes de Philippe’; Amsler, *Acta Philippi*.
- 17 Andrist, ‘L’instrumentalisation’, chap. 4.
- 18 On this text, with a complex manuscript tradition, see, as an entry point, Canella, *Gli Actus Silvestri*. Now, see also Cameron, ‘Flights of Fancy’.
- 19 Andrist, ‘Dialogue d’Athanase’, 269–70.
- 20 About this text, see Lahey, ‘Dialogue of Timothy’; Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’, 276; Varner, ‘In the Wake’, 229–32; Külzer, *Disputationes*, 134–6; Lahey, ‘Evidence’, 603–6; Andrist, *Codex greco Adversus Iudaeos*, chap. T–12; Idem, ‘Probable Nine Textual Recensions’. On the priority order of the recensions for reconstructing the original text of TA, see Andrist, ‘Dialogue d’Athanase’, 274–9.
- 21 TA, ed. Robertson: διάλογος Χριστιανοῦ καὶ Ἰουδαίου, ὃν τὰ ὀνόματα τοῦ μὲν Χριστιανοῦ Τιμόθεος τοῦ δὲ Ἰουδαίου Ἀκύλας, γενόμενος ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Κυρίλλου τοῦ ἀγιωτάτου ἀρχιεπισκόπου Ἀλεξανδρείας; trans. Varner, 140–1 (slightly modified).
- 22 TA, ed. Robertson:
- 57.1 ὁ δὲ Ἰουδαῖος ἔμεινεν ἐνεὸς ὥσει ὥραν μίαν, μηδὲν λέγων.
- 57.2 λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Χριστιανὸς συνήκας ταῦτα πάντα, ὃ ἄνθρωπε τοῦ θεοῦ;
- 57.3 ὁ Ἰουδαῖος εἶπεν· συνήκα.
- 57.4 ὁ Χριστιανὸς εἶπεν· καὶ τί σοι δόκει περὶ τοῦτο;
- 57.5 ὁ Ἰουδαῖος εἶπεν· ἐπ’ ἀληθείας ἐπεισάς με πάντοθεν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν θεὸς θεῶν, καὶ κύριος κυρίων, καὶ βασιλεὺς βασιλέων, καὶ ὅτι πλημμελία ἐπλημμέλησαν οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν, ἐπενέγκαντες χεῖρας ἐπ’ αὐτόν. 57.6 νῦν οὖν, ἄνθρωπε τοῦ θεοῦ, τί ποιήσας σωθῶ, ἀναγγεῖλόν μοι.
- 57.7 ὁ Χριστιανὸς εἶπεν· εἰ πιστεύεις ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς συνέσεώς σου, ἀναστὰς βάπτισαι καὶ ἀπολῶσαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου, 57.8 ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἵνα ἀκούσης μετὰ τῶν ἀκούοντων παρὰ τοῦ ἱεροψάλτου βασιλέως καὶ προφήτου καὶ πατριάρχου Δαυὶδ λέγοντος μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι καὶ ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι.

- ^{57.9} καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν, ὁ Χριστιανὸς ἀνέστη διὰ τὸν ὄχλον ἐπιφωνεῖν τὸν πιστὸν καὶ λέγειν· νικᾷ ἡ πίστις τῶν Χριστιανῶν, εὐφημεῖν τε τὸν βασιλέα καὶ τὸν ισάγγελον ἐπίσκοπον.
- ^{57.10} ὁ δὲ Ἰουδαῖος ἀναστὰς καὶ πεσὼν πρὸς τοὺς ποδὰς τοῦ Χριστιανοῦ καὶ ὑψώσας τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν κλαυθμῷ καὶ ὀδυρμῷ πικροτάτῳ, ἔλεγεν τῷ Χριστιανῷ ἐκζητήσαι κύριος ὁ θεὸς τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἐκ τῶν χειρῶν σου, ἐάν μὴ ποιήσης με Χριστιανόν.
- ^{57.11} καὶ ἀνέστησεν αὐτὸν ὁ Χριστιανὸς καὶ εἰσελθὼν πρὸς τὸν ἀγιώτατον ἐπίσκοπον Κύριλλον, ὁ Χριστιανὸς ἐξηγήσατο αὐτῷ πάντα τὰ γενόμενα. ^{57.12} καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος· τέκνον, τὸν κοπιῶντα γεωργὸν δεῖ πρῶτον τῶν καρπῶν μεταλαμβάνειν· σὺ κεκοπίακας, σὺ λάβε πρῶτον τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ. ^{57.13} τοῦ δὲ εἰπόντος ὅτι οὐκ εἰμι ἐν κλήρῳ, δρομαῖος ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἦλθεν εἰς τὸ Κυριακὸν καὶ δοὺς εἰρήνην χειροτονεῖ αὐτὸν διάκονον· ^{57.14} καὶ πάλιν δοὺς εἰρήνην ποιεῖ αὐτὸν πρεσβύτερον, καὶ δίδωσιν αὐτῷ λοιποὺς πρεσβυτέρους καὶ διακόνους πρὸς ὑπηρεσίαν τῆς λειτουργίας· ^{57.15} ἰδοὺσι δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ διφθέριον γεγραμμένον τὰς ἐπικλήσεις καὶ εὐχὰς τῆς ἀκολουθείας.
- ^{57.16} καὶ ἀπελθὼν ὁ ὁσιώτατος πρεσβύτερος Τιμόθεος μετὰ τῶν λοιπῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ διακόνων ἐν τῷ τόπῳ ἔνθα ἦν ὁ Ἀκύλας ἀπεκδεχόμενος, καὶ λαβὼν αὐτὸν εἰσήγαγεν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. ^{57.17} καὶ ἐποίησαν πᾶσαν τὴν ἀκολουθειάν καὶ ἐβάπτισεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, μετονομάσας αὐτὸν Θεόγνωστον· ^{57.18} ὃς μεταλαβὼν τῶν ἀχράντων μυστηρίων ἐγένετο δοχεῖον τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, ὁ ποτε Ἰουδαῖος, νῦν δὲ Χριστιανὸς διὰ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ποτε λύκος, νῦν δὲ πρόβατον Χριστοῦ γενόμενος.
- ^{57.19} καὶ ἔλαβεν αὐτὸν ὁ πρεσβύτερος Τιμόθεος ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ οἴκῳ καὶ ἦσαν διαπαντὸς ἀμαδοξάζοντες Πατέρα καὶ Υἱὸν καὶ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, ^{57.20} ᾧ πᾶσα τιμὴ καὶ κράτος εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν; trans Varner, 278–81 (slightly modified and emphasis added).
- 23 *TA*, ed. Robertson: ^{1.1a} τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γεναμένης κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην, καὶ τῶν προφητικῶν φωνῶν πληρουμένων καὶ τῶν ἀποστολικῶν διδαγμάτων φαιδρυνομένων, καὶ τῆς πίστεως τῆς εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν καὶ ὁμοούσιον τριάδα εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην στηριζομένης παντὶ τε καὶ πανταχοῦ. ^{1.1b} ἀκολασία μὲν ἐδιώκετο, ἀρετὴ δὲ ἐπολιτεύετο, μισαδελφία κατεκρίνετο, φιλοξενία δὲ ἐπληθύνετο, διάβολος μὲν ἡσχύνετο, θεὸς δὲ ἐδοξάζετο. ^{1.2} ὁ δὲ μισόκαλος daίμων θεωρήσας θεὸν μὲν δοξαζόμενον καὶ προσκυνούμενον, τὰ δὲ αὐτοῦ ἔργα λυόμενα καὶ καταπτύμενα. ^{1.3} πάντῳ ἡγανάκτησεν καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τινα ἄνθρωπον Ἰουδαῖον, ὀνόματι Ἀκύλαν [. . .]
- ^{2.1} ἐν μὲν οὖν τῶν ἡμέρων, ἐκαθέζετο Ἀκύλας ἐν τόπῳ τινὶ τῆς Ἰουδαϊκῆς καὶ ἐλάλει τοῖς παρατυγχάνουσιν Ἰουδαίοις περὶ τῶν τοιούτων· ^{2.2} καὶ ταῦτα αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος, Τιμόθεός τις ὀνόματι Χριστιανός, παρεστὼς καὶ ἀκούσας αὐτοῦ ταῦτα λέγοντος, ποιήσας τὴν ἐν Χριστῷ σφραγίδα, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ σταυροῦ ἐπὶ τῷ μετώπῳ καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ ἑαυτοῦ, εἶπεν τῷ Ἀκύλᾳ· θέλεις συγκαθεσθέντες ἐν τόπῳ τινὶ περὶ τοῦτου ζητήσιν ποιούμεθα ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων γραφῶν;
- ^{2.3} ὁ δὲ Ἰουδαῖος εἶπεν· ναί, εἰ θέλεις, ποιήσωμεν.
- ^{2.4} ὁ δὲ Χριστιανὸς φησι· πότε βούλῃ;
- ^{2.5} ὁ δὲ Ἰουδαῖος εἶπεν· αὐριον.
- ^{3.1} καὶ ἐγένετο τῇ ἐπαυριον, καθισάντων αὐτῶν ἐν τόπῳ καλουμένῳ Δρόμῳ, καὶ ἀκροατηρίου συστησαμένου μεγάλου, εὐθέως ὁ Ἰουδαῖος εἶπεν [. . .]; trans. Varner, 140–3 (slightly modified and emphasis added).

24 See above, n. 20.

25 Fields, *Anonymous Dialogue*, 22.

26 About this text, see Bringle, 'Polémique religieuse'; Cameron, 'Flights of Fancy', 391–4; Heyden, *Erzählung des Aphroditian*, 116–70; Déroche, 'Polémique anti-judaïque',

- 277–8; Lahey, ‘Evidence’, 606–8; Andrist, *Codex greco Adversus Iudaeos*, chap. T–9. About the date, see Bringel, ‘Polémique religieuse’, 20–4.
- 27 *GP*, ed. Bringel, 288: ¹ Βασιλεύοντος Αρρενάτου τῆς Περσικῆς χώρας, καὶ δεύτερος αὐτοῦ ὢν Πασάργαρος ὁ τῶν ὑπάτων τὰς ὑπατείας ἐπ’ ἐξουσίας ἔχων, καὶ τρίτος Διοκλῆς ὁ καὶ τὰς σατραπίας καὶ στρατηγίας χειρίζων, καὶ Ἀφροδιτιανὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀρχιμαγείρου διέπων ἄξιαν, γέγονε φιλονεικία κατ’ αὐτὴν τὴν χώραν μεταξὺ Ἑλλήνων καὶ Χριστιανῶν περὶ Διονυσάρχου καὶ Φιλίππου, τῶν ἱστοριογράφων· οἱ μὲν Ἑλληνες Διονυσάρχου προιστάμενοι, οἱ δὲ Χριστιανοὶ Φιλίππου; trans. Eastbourne, 1.
- 28 Bratke, *Religionsgespräch am Hof*, 244; Bringel, ‘Polémique religieuse’, 289 n. 1.
- 29 *GP*, ed. Bringel, 290: ² καὶ πολλῶν κινήθοντων συνήξεν ὁ βασιλεὺς πάντας τοὺς τῆς χώρας ἐπισκόπους ὑπὲρ ἑκατὸν γινομένους καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτας, ἐν οἷς καμὲ προετρέψαντο ὑπαντήσαι μόνον ὄντα ἐκ Ῥωμαίων οἱ γὰρ πάντες τῶν μερῶν ἐκείνων ἦσαν; trans. Eastbourne, 1.
- 30 *GP*, ed. Bringel, 290–4: ³ καὶ συναθροισθέντες, ἤνεγκεν ὁ βασιλεὺς τοὺς ῥεμβεῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· ἐπειδὴ τινες ἔφησαν, τὰς Ἑλλήνων εὐγλωττίας εἰρηκέναι περὶ Χριστοῦ, καὶ τινες ἔτεροι ἀμφιβάλλουσιν, δικασταὶ ἀμφοτέρων γενόμενοι τὴν ἀκριβεῖάν μοι εἶπατε· οὐτε γὰρ Ἑλλῆσι μονομερῶς πιστεύω οὔτε Χριστιανοῖς περὶ ἑαυτῶν ἀπολογουμένοις· πᾶν οὖν νομομαθὲς δελτίον ἐμπόνως ἀναπτύξαντες καὶ τὴν ἔννοιαν πᾶσαν ἐκεῖ ἀπασχολήσαντες μήτε τούτων μήτε ἐκείνων αἰρούμενοι τὰ φίλα ἐπ’ ἐμὲ ἀναγάγετε, εἰδότες, ὥς, εἰ ἄλλῃ τινὶ ἐμποδισθεῖητε τάξει, πάντας ὑμᾶς ἀναίρω. εἶπον οὖν· οὐκ ἄλλο λέξομεν, βασιλεῦ, εἰ μὴ, ἃ προσήκει ἀκοῦσαι ἢ οὐράνιός σου θεϊότης ἄλλ’· εἰ δοκεῖ ὑμῖν, ἄχραντοι δεσπόται, ἀμφοτέρους τοῖς μέρεσι δότε κριτὴν τὸν πάμφορον καὶ γνήσιον Ἀφροδιτιανόν; trans. Eastbourne, 1–2.
- 31 *GP*, ed. Bringel, 296: ⁴ οἱ δὲ Ἰουδαῖοι δόλω τοῦτον προεβάλλοντο, ἵνα τὸ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ὄνομα καταπατήσῃ· οὗτος δὲ ὁ Ἀφροδιτιανὸς Ἑλλῆν ἦν, ᾧ πᾶν στόμα συνᾶραι λόγον οὐκ ἠδύνατο· ἦν δὲ ἡμῖν οὐκ ὀλίγος ἀγὼν ἐπικείμενος τὸ μὴ ἡττηθῆναι τοῦτω. πᾶσαι γὰρ αἱ τρίχες ἡμῶν, ἔννοιαι εἰ ἐγένοντο, ἐν ψυλὸν αὐτοῦ ἐνθύμημα λῦσαι οὐκ ἠδύναντο; trans. Eastbourne, 3.
- 32 *GP*, ed. Bringel, 482–4 : ⁸¹ [. . .] καὶ περὶ πάντων Ἑλλήνων καὶ Χριστιανῶν καὶ Ἰουδαίων· ὀνόματι μόνω κομπάζομεν. ὥστε, ἀδελφοί, κἂν ὑμεῖς χριστιανίζητε κἂν ὑμεῖς ἰουδαίζητε, τὸν τῆς εἰρήνης σύνδεσμον μὴ ἀπολέσητε· ἀγαπητικῶς προτιμώντες ἑαυτοὺς ζηλώσωμεν τῶν οὐρανίων τὰ ἀδιάστατα, μισήσωμεν τῶν ἐναντίων τὸν ἀπομερισμόν· περιπτύξασθε ἑαυτοὺς πάντες αἰτούσης ὑμᾶς τῆς ἄνω χάριτος. ⁸² καὶ ἔσχεν χάριν ὁ ἄνθρωπος, πείσαι ἀμφοτέρω τὰ μέρη διαλλαγῆναι ἑαυτοῖς, τῶν περὶ Σίμωνα καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους περὶ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ μέρους Ἰακώβ αἰτούντων μὴ καταλεῖναι ἀρχαίαν φιλίαν· ἀλλ’ ἡ μὲν θρησκεία, ὥς ἂν τις θέλῃ, ἀνυποκρίτου μενούσης τῆς ἀγάπης. Καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι ἀλλήλους, ὥς ἔδει, καὶ τοὺς ἐπισκόπους ποδοφιλήσαντες τῷ τε θεῷ εὐχαριστήσαντες καὶ τὸν βασιλέα πλεῖστα εὐφημήσαντες τὸ τε ἀλληλοῦς ἐβραϊκῶς καὶ κοινῶς εἰπόντες ἀπέστησαν ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων. ἐβραπτίσθη δὲ Ἰακώβ καὶ Φαρῶς καὶ ἐξήκοντα ψυχαί. οἱ δὲ ἄλλοι ἐν τῷ ἀποσχίσματι Σίμωνος ἔμειναν, οὓς ἐκάλεσαν Χριστιανομεριστάς, τοῦ Ἀφροδιτιανοῦ ἀμφοτέρους παραινούντος τιμᾶν πρόνοιαν, ὅτι καὶ αὕτη μεγάλως ἐτίμησεν ἡμᾶς; trans. Eastbourne, 28–9.
- 33 About this text, see, as an entry point, Nuvolone, ‘Légende du Christ’, especially 207–11 about the not-always-negative attitude of the text toward the Jews. On the date, see 213 and Nuvolone’s translation, 79. See also Külzer, *Disputationes*, 129–34; Lahey, ‘Evidence for Jewish Believers’, 615–18; Andrist, *Codex greco Adversus Iudaeos*, chap. T–7.
- 34 On this text, see Pretty, *Dialogue* (cf. Adamantius), 1–31; Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 43; Hoffmann, *Dialog bei den christlichen Schriftstellern*, 84–91; Voss, *Dialog in der frühchristlichen Literatur*, 135–48; Methodius, *De Autexusio*, ed. Vailant; Andrist, ‘Dialogue d’Athanase’, 436–7.
- 35 Bringel, ‘Polémique religieuse’, 25–7.

- 36 A third example would be the five-day *Dialexis* in the *Vita Gregentii*, but the apparent date of its preserved redaction falls in the tenth century, outside the limits of this article (Berger, *Life and Works*, 97–109). There are, however, good reasons to believe it is built on a previous work or redaction (see Cameron, ‘Flights of Fancy’, 398–402).
- 37 On this text, see Bardy, *Trophées de Damas*; Cameron, ‘Trophies of Damascus’; Idem, ‘Jews in Seventh-Century Palestine’, 86; Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’, 14, 280; Andrist and Déroche, ‘Questions ouvertes’, 14; Aulisa and Schiano, *Dialogo di Papisco*, 328–36; finally, Van Nuffelen in this volume. Incidentally, at the beginning of the first discussion, the author explains that it is more convenient to put the words of all the Jews in the mouth of one Jewish character only; see Bardy, *Trophées de Damas*, 21–2 [reprint, 191–2].
- 38 *Trophaea Damasci*, Titel, ed. and trans. Bardy, 5 [189]: Τῆς θείας καὶ ἀνικήτου θεοῦ ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἀληθείας πεπραγμένα τρόπαια κατὰ Ἰουδαίων ἐν Δαμασκῷ τῇ φιλοχρίστῳ καὶ λαμπρᾷ μητροπόλει, τῷ ἔτει τῷ εικοστῷ Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ θεοστηρίκτου τοῦ μετὰ Κωνσταντίνων ἡμῶν βασιλέως μηνὶ αὐγούστῳ ἰνδικτιόνος θ´. The interpretation of this indiction has been disputed; see Bardy, *Trophées de Damas*, 5–6 [175–6].
- 39 *Trophaea Damasci*, 2.1.1, ed. and trans. Bardy, 5 [215]: συνελθόντες δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ κατὰ τὰ δόξαντα ἡμεῖς τε καὶ τῶν Ἰουδαίων οἱ πρόκριτοι, συμπαρόντος καὶ πλήθους οὐκ ὀλίγου λαῶν, Ἰουδαίων, ἑλλήνων, σαμαρειτῶν, αἰρετικῶν, χριστιανῶν, δημόσιος γὰρ ἦν καὶ μάλα ὁ τόπος ἐμφανέστατος.
- 40 On this text, see, as an entry point, Dagron and Déroche, ‘Doctrina’. See also Cameron, ‘Jews in Seventh-Century Palestine’, 79–83; Külzer, *Disputationes*, 142–7, under the name of ‘Sargis von Abergā’.
- 41 Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*; Déroche, ‘Contacts entre juifs’; Ibid., ‘Forms and Functions’, 536–45; Lafranchi, *L’image du judaïsme*; Andrist, ‘L’instrumentalisation’. For a less nuanced judgement, Lahey, ‘Evidence for Jewish Believers’.
- 42 On the story of Cosmas, see Robertson, ‘Dialogue of Timothy’, 240–2; Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’, 285–6; Lahey, ‘Jewish Biblical Interpretation’, 284–5; Andrist, ‘Greek Bible’, 240–2. *Pratum Spirituale*, ed. PG 87/3: 3040: ¹⁷²περὶ τοῦτου δὲ κυροῦ Κοσμά τοῦ σχολαστικοῦ, πολλοὶ μὲν πολλὰ, ἄλλοι δὲ ἄλλα, καὶ πλείστοι πλείστα ἡμῖν διηγῆσαντο. ὧν δὲ ἡμεῖς αὐτόπται ἦμεν, καὶ οἷς ἀκριβῶς παρηκολουθήσαμεν, ταῦτα γράφομεν, πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἐντυγχανόντων ὠφέλειαν. ἦν γὰρ ὁ ἀνὴρ ταπεινόφρων, ἐλεήμων, ἐγκρατής, παρθένος, ἥσυχος, ἀόργητος, φιλοσέταιρος, φιλόξενος, φιλόπτωχος. πολλὴν οὖν ἡμῖν ὁ θαυμάσιος οὗτος ἀνὴρ ὠφέλειαν ἐνεποιεῖ, οὐ μόνον θεωρούμενος καὶ διδάσκων, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πολύβιβλον ὑπὲρ πάντας τοὺς ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ ὄντας, καὶ προθύμως παρεῖχεν τοῖς θέλουσιν. ἦν δὲ καὶ ἀκτήμων· ἐν ὧν γὰρ τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ, ἕτερον οὐδὲν ἦν θεωρῆσαι, εἰ μὴ βιβλία, καὶ κλίνην, καὶ τράπεζαν. ἐξὸν δὲ ἦν παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ εἰσιεῖναι, καὶ ἐπερωτᾶν τὰ πρὸς ὠφέλειαν, καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν. καθ’ ἑκάστην δὲ ἡμέραν εἰσερχόμεν πρὸς αὐτὸν, καὶ ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς ἀληθείας, οὐδέποτε εἰσῆλθον, καὶ οὐχ εἶδρον αὐτὸν ἢ ἀναγινώσκοντα, ἢ κατὰ Ἰουδαίων συγγραφόμενον· πολὺν γὰρ ζῆλον εἶχεν εἰς τὸ ἐπιστρέφειν Ἑβραίους ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν. διὸ καὶ πολλάκις με ἐπεμψεν πρὸς τινὰς Ἑβραίους ἵνα ἀπὸ Γραφῆς αὐτοῖς διαλεχθῶ, διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν μὴ ταχέως ἐξέρχεσθαι τοῦ οἴκου αὐτοῦ.
- 43 Andrist, ‘Greek Bible’, 260–1.
- 44 Previously known under the name *Dialogus Papisus et Philonis cum monacho*. For this text, see, as an entry point, Andrist and Déroche, ‘Questions ouvertes’.
- 45 E.g. *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 18–20.
- 46 *Doctrina Iacobi*, 1.1, ed. Déroche, 70 (preserved in the Slavonic and, with some differences, the Arabic versions).
- 47 As already noted in Déroche’s edition, 71 n. 6.

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5 Prepared for all occasions

The Trophies of Damascus and the Bonwetsch Dialogue

*Peter Van Nuffelen**

The *Trophies of Damascus* is an anti-Jewish dialogue of the last quarter of the seventh century set in Damascus, which by this time was under Arab rule. This particular context has raised the question to what extent the text may reflect contemporary political concerns about the faltering Roman empire and how this affects anti-Jewish polemic. Indeed, it has been suggested that the Jews of the dialogue are only a cipher for the Arabs.¹ The present chapter proposes a different approach. First, I shall argue that we should situate the *Trophies* in their appropriate textual context and see them as part of a larger polemical enterprise by a single author. Indeed, in the manuscript, the anti-Jewish dialogue is followed by an anti-miaphysite dialogue composed by the same author. I shall call this untitled text the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* after its modern editor and argue that is the second part of a single work.² This re-contextualisation raises questions about our scholarly tendency to study *Adversus Iudaeos* texts in isolation and I shall suggest that contemporary heresiology provides a better context to understand this text (that is, both dialogues). Second, I shall interrogate the text for what it tells us about dialoguing – in other words, I shall focus on the explicit and implicit reflection of the text on the event it represents. I shall suggest that this approach may help us to overcome the problem of drawing conclusions about real practice from literary texts.

A single apologetic enterprise

Even when studied on its own, the *Trophies of Damascus* is a remarkable piece. Although some fragments have been discovered in a palimpsest from Vienna,³ its full form is only preserved in a single manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Parisinus Coislianus 299, from the eleventh century. The first part of the manuscript contains three anti-Jewish works: the *Doctrina Jacobi*, the long version of the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* and the *Trophies*. It is followed by a dossier regarding Paul of Samosata, and works of Athanasius, Gregory Thaumaturgus, and Cyril of Alexandria. Each part probably has independent origins and they were only put together for this manuscript.⁴ Although *Adversus Iudaeos* texts often borrow from each other, the *Trophies* only seem to be in direct context with the *Dialogue of Papiscus and Philon*, of which the

short version is contemporaneous with the *Trophies*, whereas the longer version postdates it by several centuries. The first sessions of the *Trophies* share arguments with that dialogue and one manuscript of the *Dialogue of Papiscus and Philon* borrows the ending of the *Trophies*.⁵ Apart from this, the limited manuscript tradition suggests that the *Trophies* is a relatively isolated piece. The text also stands out by providing a (fairly) precise dating, situating the debate in the twentieth year of the emperor Constantine, son of Constantine, and to the ninth indiction. The reference is to Constantine IV (668–685), who ruled with his father from 654. His twentieth year would be 674. This is not a ninth indiction, whereas 666 and 681 are. Different solutions have been proposed, but it seems certain the text dates to the 670s–680s.⁶ One should note, moreover, that the text offers a dramatic date for the dialogue, which may be different from the actual date of writing. The *Bonwetsch Dialogue* is undated and does not offer any precise clues. The encounter, however, is said to have happened ‘recently’,⁷ thus drawing attention to the fact that dramatic date and date of writing are distinct.

Another noteworthy feature of the *Trophies* is that it is part of a polemical diptych. The anti-Jewish dialogue describing the confrontation between a Christian monk and different Jewish representatives over four sessions in the city of Damascus is followed by a dialogue between a Jacobite stylite and a Chalcedonian, who, interestingly, poses as a Gaianite, that is, as a Miaphysite Aphthartodocetist. The two are linked by a transition which provides a heresiological overview from Arius to Miaphysitism. Both parts have been edited separately and have never been studied together. Indeed, the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* has, to my knowledge, never received any attention at all since its publication in 1909. Although the integration of anti-Jewish polemic in a work that targets other enemies of orthodoxy is not unique,⁸ the modern tendency to see the *Adversus Iudaeos* texts as a separate genre and tradition has led to the neglect of the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*.⁹ Against this scholarly background, it seems justified to briefly argue for the obvious, namely that both parts indeed belong together and constitute a single apologetic enterprise.

A unity of purpose is explicitly claimed by the first lines of the transition:

Because not every baptized person, but (only) every illuminated orthodox is a son of God, so let us, let us then rush into the war against the heretic, after the Jewish war, as the occasion calls us from strength to strength.¹⁰

In addition, as noted by Bonwetsch, the elaborate style is shared by all three components of the work.¹¹

A possible argument is that the manuscript does not group the two texts under a single heading, but treats the passage just quoted as a heading for the *Transition* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*. This need not cause more doubt than justified. The very presence of the *Transition* and *Bonwetsch Dialogue* within a manuscript that purported to collect anti-Jewish texts demonstrates that the compiler found them integrated into the *Trophies of Damascus*.¹² He may have sought to mark the

first lines of the transition as a different heading in order to indicate that the anti-Jewish material ended there.

Moreover, notwithstanding their different content, it is possible to detect a certain unity in terms of themes and content across the three parts. The introductory paragraph of the *Trophies* focuses on a general defence against the enemies of the faith, and can thus be read as reflecting the wider purposes of the author.

The correct understanding of the divine oracles is the defender of the really truthful wisdom and of the highest philosophy for those who love this wisdom. And faith should direct life and the present race: faith, the defender of the good ones; faith, the strengthening of discourse. The holy word and rule ensures us to be ready and energetic to justify the hope that we possess against everyone who demands justification (cf. 1Pet 3:15). Therefore, setting aside all burden and all useless concern, let us enter, with patience, the struggle that presents itself to us, looking towards the author and perfecter of faith, Jesus (cf. Heb 12:1–2), for whom and with whom the meeting with the enemies takes place.¹³

This is a general call for apologetic, even if one could read the allusion to the *Letter to the Hebrews* as announcing the particular object of the *Trophies*.¹⁴ The opening sentence of the *Transition*, quoted above, confirms the general purpose that this passage suggests: the aim of the author is not just to combat the Jews but also to define orthodoxy. Indeed, after having defended Christians against Jews, there is a need to diversify within the group of the Christians: not all baptised individuals are sons of God, only the orthodox. The *Trophies* provides half of that programme, whereas the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* only focuses on polemic against the Miaphysites. The transition therefore provides a catalogue of heresies, from Arius onwards to cover the wide spectrum of Christian heresies. Towards its end (114), the author singles out Nestorianism and the followers of Severus as the two great evils in the history of the Church. This allows him to construct orthodoxy as the ‘royal road’, the healthy midway between these two aberrations. As Nestorianism is, by this time, not a real threat anymore (at least from the imperial perspective the author espouses), the focus of the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* appears as an almost natural choice.

The list of heresies in the *Transition* would deserve detailed attention. Here I wish only to single out two elements. First, the vast majority of the heresies mentioned there are also referred to in the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*, again underlining the unity of composition. Second, the catalogue of heresies clearly reflects seventh-century concerns, in particular with Monothelitism. Apollinarius is said to have taught that Christ had no human will (109.12) and the idea of one will is attributed to Eutyches (110.12–16). Although the Monothelite controversy raged within the Chalcedonian community, the doctrine was depicted as having developed under the influence of heretical Miaphysite doctrines.¹⁵ The *Bonwetsch Dialogue* also shows a concern with the issue of divine will.¹⁶ The text is therefore dyothelite in outlook; the fact that Monothelitism is not explicitly defined as a heresy could

be used (with due caution) to argue that it cannot postdate by much the Council of 681.

A final indication of unity of composition is the fact that both dialogues open with allusions to St Paul and, more specifically, to the *Epistle to the Galatians*. Damascus, where the debate depicted in the *Trophies* was held, was obviously the place where the Jew Saul had converted to Christianity (Acts 8) and the author would have singularly lacked ambition had he not made something out of this. In fact, the *Trophies* opens with an elaborate eulogy of Paul, who is said to have provided the impetus for the debate.¹⁷ Jews are said to have heard Gal. 3.13: 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us', and, having realised that they themselves do not follow the law anymore, they started looking for someone who could explain how they had been freed from the law. The allusion to the *Epistle to the Galatians* is picked up again in the first paragraph of the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*, providing the setting for the debate: the Jacobite stylite is said to be a Galatian in blood and spirit. This alludes to the Galatians as depicted in the *Epistle to the Galatians*, who have succumbed to false preachers (1.6, 3.1). Later on, Paul will provide the justification for the cheating on which the dialogue was based.¹⁸ Noteworthy is also that the first biblical quotation by the orthodox monk in the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* is Gal 1.9.¹⁹ The choice of Galatians as a sub-text is both obvious and clever. The *Epistle to the Galatians* argues against the imposition of Jewish law on Christians and hence prepares in a way the argument put forward in the *Trophies*. At the same time, the epistle also reports the famous conflict between Peter and Paul (2.11–14) and thus centres on issues of conflict resolution within the Christian community. More importantly, it situates the *Trophies* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* within a long tradition of identifying the truth and arguing for it against adversaries, stretching back to the very beginnings of Christianity. The author takes the long view.

The preceding argument for seeing the *Trophies* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* as a single composition has helped us to uncover some of the literary features of the text, including an intelligent use of biblical references. Notwithstanding the (somewhat) precise date provided for the *Trophies*, we are thus dealing with a literary composition. This does not preclude the possibility that the debates reported may be rooted in real events, but there can be no doubt that the text is a literary elaboration. This much is confirmed by the author himself who states that for reasons of clarity he has depicted two individuals talking to each other, whereas in reality a group of Jews were the opponent of the Christian.²⁰ The text must, therefore, be interrogated as a product of literature and not as a reflection of reality. This is an obvious point to make, but the detailed staging of the debate might induce one to think otherwise.²¹

Second, we should avoid seeing *Adversus Iudaeos* dialogues as a distinct genre, whose development can be studied autonomously and without reference to other types of polemical dialogues.²² The author of the *Trophies* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* did not consider that he was engaging in two distinct activities: rather, the polemic against the Miaphysites was an extension of the argument against the Jews and part of a general attempt to define orthodoxy. This leads us to a

final point: the context in which to understand the piece under discussion is that of contemporary heresiology. I shall give only two examples from the seventh century. Anastasius the Sinaite is the author of *Disputatio adversus Iudaeos*²³ and of the *Viae Dux (Hodegos)*, which defines orthodoxy by contradistinction with a range of heresies. To that end, it combines theological discussions, citations from the Fathers, as well as dialogues. The *Doctrina Patrum* is a florilegium dated between 662 and 726 and possibly before 680.²⁴ Whilst not dialogical in nature, its doctrinal focus is similar to that of the *Trophies* and *Bonwetsch Dialogue*: besides focusing on contemporary heresies and their ancestors (including Mani, Apollinarius and Origen, as do the *Transition* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*), it also has a section against the Jews (§ 32). Interestingly, just as the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* discusses definitions of terms (§ 60), the *Doctrina* includes a list of definitions (§ 33), which had become, by this time, a recurring feature of doctrinal discussions.²⁵ Equally, the *Doctrina* fails to mention Muslims. These examples demonstrate that the text formed by the combination of the *Trophies* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* may appear exceptional in some respects, but is far less so when compared with the two works I have just mentioned. It shares with both the inclusion of the Jews in a wider heresiological programme; with Anastasius, the combination of dialogue and a heresiological account; and with the *Doctrina Patrum*, the lack of interest in the Muslims.²⁶ Original though it may appear at first sight, the work is fully comprehensible within the Christian literary tradition and within contemporary practice and interest.

Reflecting about dialogues

The author is emphatically present in his text and there can be little doubt that he identifies with the orthodox side in the argument. Indeed, the text reports debates the author has heard about, but he occasionally uses the first person plural when talking about the orthodox spokesperson.²⁷ This is not a general feature of polemical dialogues: Anastasius the Sinaite, for example, when reporting a debate in which he took part, takes care to indicate the interlocutors with the general designations of 'orthodox' and 'heretic'.²⁸ The engaged nature of the text should not lead us to think that it merely touts the triumph of orthodoxy. I have argued elsewhere that it is a feature of late antique dialogues to reflect about the conditions and nature of proper dialogue and persuasion.²⁹ Within the late antique understanding of conversion, emphasis was put on persuasion as the fundamental condition and on the concomitant rejection of force – in the sense that force could in theory only be accepted as a tool to remove obstacles to persuasion but cannot bring about true faith in itself. A dialogue was thus ideally supposed to be a place for the display of reasonable argument to lead someone to the truth. These highly normative expectations led to a constant suspicion about debates, especially on the side of the losers, who could challenge their defeat on the grounds that the basic conditions of a proper dialogue had not been met. Conversely, winners needed to demonstrate that their victory was indeed one of reason and truth. Contrary to widespread modern perceptions, late ancient dialogues are therefore

not just celebrations of the superiority of one particular religious group, but also occasions to reflect about the process of persuasion, conversion and dialogue. This approach may help us to overcome the divide between literary form and social reality, whereby the acceptance of the literary nature of these texts has led to their rejection as sources for real social practice.

The *Trophies* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* both reflect on the possibility of persuasion and dialogue, but they do so in different ways. In contrast to the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*, and to its own specific geographical and temporal situating of the debate with the Jews, the *Trophies* make little effort at providing a precise staging for the event. Rather, attention is immediately focused on why the Jews decided to debate with the Christian monk. The initiative is clearly attributed to the Jews themselves, who start 'secretly' looking for someone who can explain how they have been freed from the law.³⁰ Thus, whereas some other sixth- and seventh-century dialogues attribute the initiative for the debate to Christians (such as the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila* and the *Doctrina Jacobi*), here the Jews are said to have asked a child if it could bring them to someone who could answer this question 'peacefully'.³¹

This opening highlights interests that run through the entire text. First, the Jews start looking in secret for someone who can explain to them the abolition of the law. Implied is that they cross the clearly demarcated group boundaries that exist between Jews and Christians: they do so in secret because their doubts betray an opening towards Christianity. Once they have found an interlocutor, however, they will invite their leaders to debate with the monk: indeed, in each of the four consecutive debates that are described in the *Trophies*, the Jews field different sets of authorities against the monk. Debate is thus a matter of the learned and those in authority: they represent the truth of the community and should defend it. The series of defeats lead to disarray within the Jewish community.³² Conversion of the leaders, however, is unlikely, in contrast with the ordinary people. This is hinted at by the Christian interlocutor when he says:

The Christian, having the floor, said to the Jews: I do not want to make all of you Christians, nor would I be able to do so. But I make you bad Jews. . . . But the people here present are strengthened and derive not a small benefit from the present discourse.³³

The monk here addresses the Jewish leaders, whom he then contrasts with the ordinary people (λαός) consisting of pagans, Arabs, Samaritans, Jews and Christians. The debate is thus expected, on the one hand, to support rank-and-file Christians in their beliefs, and, on the other, to convince ordinary believers from other communities to cross to his group after the defeat of the Jewish leaders. That he expects non-Jews to be converted by the defeat of the Jews suggests that debates were important social occasions for the affirmation of the truth represented by a particular community. Whereas the leaders of a community, however, are unlikely to convert, their community is still destabilised by having its certainties undermined.

Second, the opening section of the *Trophies* also demonstrates a particular interest in the psychology of the Jews. The choice to attribute the initiative to Jews who have started doubting their own faith can be read as reflecting the widespread idea that a dialogue of the deaf is useless: an interlocutor must be willing to open up to the arguments.³⁴ In this process, emotions play an important role. The debate of the *Trophies* starts and ends with emotions: the feeling of insecurity I just referred to and a grand scene in which the disarray and shame of the Jews is graphically depicted in a long list of the emotions they express. In it, the author deploys a wry sense of humour by having some Jews exclaim, 'Abala! Of how many pigs have we been robbed'.³⁵ To modern ears, shaming has a distinctively negative ring, but it is important to see that in ancient psychology, shame was an emotion that helped individuals to correct their own wrong behaviour.³⁶ The feeling of shame on the side of the Jews is thus a first step towards the correction of their ways.

Finally, the demand of the Jews to find someone who can debate peacefully with them hints at the ideal I sketched above: debates should be based on argument and not on threats. The fear of violence is expressed by Jews in another anti-Jewish dialogue, the *Anonymus Declerck* (dated to the sixth century), where it allows the author to emphasise the peaceful nature of Christianity.³⁷ Many dialogues, including the *Trophies*,³⁸ do betray an awareness that debates may not always have lived up the ideal and are thus at pains to show that the events they reported do indeed live up to it.

In contrast to the *Trophies*, the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* opens with a very concrete setting and characterisation of the Jacobite monk who will be the opponent of the orthodox monk.

In the mountains of Arabia situated around Damascus and Bostra there is a village called Gasymeos, wholly taken by the Jacobite heresy, about two miles south of which there is a stylite, the wretched being of their heresy, having been of the Church of Christ, a Galatian in spirit and of birth, fierce and evil and clever as that snake in Paradise, deceiving the simple-minded with his crafty talkativeness, not unacquainted with the Syrian and Greek dialect and with secular philosophy, only unacquainted with the truth from on high, virtually capable of striking down with words and reasonings those straight of heart, always and everywhere using declarations and words towards known and unknown interlocutors, and, in one word, famous across the whole of Arabia, in particular among the heretics.³⁹

With this elaborate opening, the nature of the enemy is clear,⁴⁰ as well as the daunting task that faces the orthodox. Besides setting the scene, however, the passage also highlights a theme that will recur throughout the dialogue: what is the right style of argument in theological debate? Indeed, in the dialogue, technical arguments (philosophical definitions; *diairesis* as method; the use of Aristotle⁴¹) are regularly deployed and the orthodox is never outgunned by the stylite in this respect. Yet the negative characterisation of the stylite as trained in pagan

philosophy but not in the truth indicates the author's intention to downgrade that type of knowledge. Indeed, philosophy and logic do not save the stylite from defeat, and the text even pokes fun at these tools. When asked by the stylite what the definition (ὁ ὄρος) of man is, the orthodox interlocutor, who pretends to be a simpleton, replies, 'oros [τὸ ὄρος, mountain] are these mountains that we see and the hills'.⁴² Nor does the orthodox fail to indicate what appropriate arguments are. At one point, the orthodox asks why the stylite rarely uses arguments from the Fathers, to which the stylite answers that if he did so, he would only be accused of having doctored their texts.⁴³ Earlier, in the *Transition*, the author had pointed to the fullness of the insight of the Fathers and to dialectical and philosophical argument as the origin of heresy:

[Heresies arise] not because the Holy Fathers have left something out in their opinions about Christ, but because new and crafty problems and puzzles have sprung up among them [the heretics].⁴⁴

If the dialogue reflects on how one should argue about God, in contradistinction to how it often is done, it also reflects on the appropriate tactic to engage heretics in a debate. Indeed, an original feature of the text is that it depicts the orthodox as disguising himself as a Miaphysite monk, and, in particular, a Gaianite (and thus an adherent of Aphthartodocetism). The aim is to have the stylite reveal himself to be dyophysite without actually knowing it. Indeed, at one point, the stylite consciously assumes the guise of a Chalcedonian in order to demonstrate that his interlocutor, whom he supposes to be a Gaianite, is wrong.⁴⁵ In other words, the author deploys internal Miaphysite polemics to demonstrate the truth of Chalcedonianism. The idea of pretence develops into something of a theme in the dialogue – obviously only visible to the reader and at the expense of the stylite. At the end of the second paragraph, when describing the first encounter between the stylite and the 'monk', the author notes that the stylite 'pretended humility and called himself a sinner, in which he spoke the truth'.⁴⁶ Shortly afterwards (§ 4) the monk says that he is orthodox (which he is, only not in the sense the stylite understands it). The stylite also admits the impending victory of Chalcedonianism, when complaining that 'heresy now holds everywhere'.⁴⁷ Whereas the pretence of being a Gaianite leads to the defeat of the stylite, the text also makes clear that it was a controversial tactic – one that had already been condemned by Augustine.⁴⁸ After a long silence in response to the shock outing of the monk as a Chalcedonian (a *topos* in dialogues to indicate defeat), the stylite indignantly claims that God is against cheating (§ 73). Within the Pauline context of the whole work, the orthodox replies unsurprisingly that Paul also assumed different personae on different occasions. Indeed, the author emphasises the success of the tactic by having the orthodox repeat his trick in Damascus later on (§§ 77–78). One can, therefore, understand the text as defending the value of the controversial 'undercover tactics' so successfully deployed by the orthodox against the stylite.

Faced with impending defeat, the stylite has recourse to a desperate strategy. After having been forced to admit the truth of Chalcedonianism, he requests a

divine ordeal: confessions of both sides should be thrown into the fire and, so he alleges, the orthodox one will not burn. It would have been possible for the author to have the orthodox respond to this demand positively and have the Chalcedonian confession leave the fire unscathed. Instead, he depicts this as an inappropriate and desperate demand. The orthodox replies with irony – ‘what if, by divine dispensation, both confessions burn?’ – and then challenges the stylite to throw himself into the fire – which the latter obviously refuses.⁴⁹ Recourse to miracles instead of rational argument is thus depicted as a desperate act, to be avoided by the orthodox. In this way, the text confirms the view that debates should be about rational argument.

The choice not to add a miraculous ending to the debate is, I would argue, related to the didactic purpose the author attributes to his own text:

This has been written down by myself with great care, so that things worthy of remembrance will not be sent by time to the depths of forgetfulness. For falling short in toils ourselves, we praise the sweat of others by words like those sitting in a theatre supporting athletes with their voices, and we learn from them the habits and ways for the struggle against the adversaries, so that, if ever we hold a debate with the Acephali or Severians, we too assume the mask of the Julianists, so that we shall entangle them in their own words.⁵⁰

The aim of the text is thus to prepare the reader to be able to enter successfully in discussion with heretics. It is both an account of success and a demonstration of the proper way to go about achieving it.

Conclusions

Bonwetsch suggested that the text was popular in nature.⁵¹ This is contradicted by the elaborate construction of phrases, the recourse to technical arguments, the inclusion of a heresiological overview, the conscious literary construction I have argued for, and the theological complexity of the argument, especially in the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*, where the reader must be able to understand the polemical potential of the difference between a Severian and a Gaianite. In addition, the suggestion in the *Trophies* that community leaders take part in debate combined with the didactic aim expressed at the end of the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* suggests that the intended audience was made up of clergy and community leaders for whom actual participation in debate was a realistic option. This is confirmed by the fact that the text is best understood against the background of contemporary heresiology. Nevertheless, with its vivid dialogues and its occasional flashes of humour, the text was clearly more than a mere handbook. It also stands out for its choice to combine an anti-Jewish dialogue (consisting of four smaller ones) with an anti-Miaphysite one, and to reflect explicitly on a strategy of deception in the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*. These features only enhance the didactic aim, for the work offers a variety of contexts for debate and explores a wide range of arguments that may have helped the reader to prepare for the variety of debating occasions

offered in real life. As the work shows, this was not just a matter of deploying the right technical argument to silence the opponent: one also had to engage the emotions of the adversary, to respect the nature of a debate as an occasion for argument and not for force or miracles, and to be realistic about the success one could achieve.

Notes

- * The author acknowledges the support of the Flemish Research Council.
- 1 Olster, *Roman Defeat*, 123–8; Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It*, 78–87; O’Sullivan, ‘Anti-Jewish Polemic’. For a critique, see Cameron, ‘Byzantines and Jews’ and Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’. I am not convinced this is a necessary hypothesis for the *Trophies*: Muslims generally play a small role in the heresiology and polemic of the seventh century.
- 2 In what follows, I shall refer to the three parts of the text as follows: *Trophies* (of Damascus), edited by Bardy (paragraph numbers and page numbers); *Transition* = the transitional text between the *Trophies* and the *Bonwetsch Dialogue*, also edited by Bardy; *Bonwetsch Dialogue*, edited by Bonwetsch (paragraph numbers and page numbers).
- 3 Grusková, *Untersuchungen*, 114–6.
- 4 Campos, ‘Quand Dieu dit une chose’.
- 5 McGiffert, *A Dialogue*; see also Olster, *Roman Defeat*, 118; Déroche, ‘Polémique anti-judaïque’, 282, Aulisa and Schiano, *Dialogo di Papisco*, and the comparative table of arguments used in *Adversus Iudaeos* texts in Fields, *Anonymous Dialogue*.
- 6 For discussions of the date, see Bardy, ‘Trophées de Damas’, 5; Déroche, ‘L’authenticité’, 660 n. 34; Olster, *Roman Defeat*, 131; Schreckenberg, *Adversus Iudaeos-Texte*, 449–50; Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It*, 85–6; O’Sullivan, ‘Anti-Jewish Polemic’. For indications of the date beyond the initial dating formula, see *Trophies* § 3.2, ed. Bardy, 51, where it is noted that not even fifty years have passed since the wars started. Taken as a reference to the attacks on Damascus in 634 and 635, this confirms a date in the 670s–680s. *Trophies* § 2.7, ed. Bardy, 63 notes the presence of Arabs; *Trophies* § 4.3, ed. Bardy, 94 calculates 1100 years between Daniel and the present day, which on a conventional dating of Daniel puts the speaker after 600 CE.
- 7 *Transition*, 114.10: νεωστί.
- 8 E.g. Eusebius of Emesa is said to have composed a work *Adversum Iudaeos et Gentes et Novatianos* (Jerome, *De viris illustribus*, 91). It is also common in heresiological compendia, such as the *Panarion* of Epiphanius, or Leontius of Jerusalem’s *De sectis*.
- 9 For a re-appraisal of the tradition, with more attention to its interaction with other genres, see now Déroche, ‘Forms and Functions’; Morlet, Munnich, and Pouderon, *Dialogues Adversus Iudaeos*.
- 10 *Transition*, ed. Bardy, 108.1–4: ἐπειδὴ οὐ πᾶς ὁ βαπτιζόμενος, ἀλλὰ πᾶς ὁ ὀρθόδοξος φωτιζόμενος θεοῦ νίος ἀναδείκνυται, φέρε δὴ, φέρε λοιπὸν, μετὰ τὸν ἰουδαϊκὸν πρὸς αἵρετικὸν ὥσπερ ἐκ δυνάμεως εἰς δύνανιν καιροῦ καλοῦντος εἰσπηδήσωμεν πόλεμον.
- 11 Bonwetsch, ‘Antimonophysitischer Dialog’, 154. See also Bardy, ‘Trophées de Damas’, 107.
- 12 Cf. Campos, ‘Quand Dieu dit une chose’, 287.
- 13 *Trophies*, proem. § 1, ed. Bardy, 18–19: Σοφίας ὄντως ἀληθῶς καὶ φιλοσοφίας τῆς ἀνωτάτω πρόξενος πέφυκε τοῖς ἐαυτῆς φίλοις γενέσθαι ἢ τὸν θείων λογίων ἀψευδῆς κατάληψις· ἀλλὰ πίστις ἡγείσθω τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ παρόντος δρόμου· πίστις, ἢ τῶν ἀγαθῶν πρόξενος· πίστις, ἢ τῶν λόγων βεβαίωσις. Καὶ ἐπεὶ ἱερὸς ἡμᾶς ἀσφαλιζεται λόγος καὶ ὅρος, ἐτοιμοὺς καὶ θερμοὺς εἶναι πρὸς ἀπολογίαν παντὶ τῷ ἐρωτοῦντι ἡμᾶς λόγον περὶ τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ἐλπίδος, ὄγκον [δυσωπῶ] πάντα ἀποθέμενοι νῦν καὶ πᾶσαν

- φροντίδα ἀνωφελῇ, μεθ' ὑπομονῆς εἰσέλθωμεν εἰς τὸν προκειμένον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα, ἀποβλέποντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως καὶ τοῦ λόγου ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν, ὑπὲρ οὗ καὶ μεθ' οὗ ὁ σύλλογος γίνεται κατὰ τῶν ἐναντίων.
- 14 Conversely, the *Bonwetsch Dialogue* has some references to the Jews: § 32 and § 40 (a quotation of 1Cor 2:8, a classical anti-Jewish passage).
 - 15 See, e.g. the letter of Agatho (*PL* 87:1160); the confession of faith cited in Session XVIII of the Council of 681 (ACO 2.2).
 - 16 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 58, ed. Bonwetsch, 138.14.
 - 17 *Proem*. § 2, ed. Bardy, 20.
 - 18 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 73, ed. Bonwetsch, 146. Paul was seen as an excellent debater: see John Chrysostom, *De Sacerdotio*, 4.7.
 - 19 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 5, ed. Bonwetsch, 125.
 - 20 *Trophies*, 1.1, ed. Bardy, 22.1–2.
 - 21 The measure to which anti-Jewish texts reflect real debates is still discussed. See, e.g. Pastis, 'Representation of the Jews' and Lahey, 'Jewish Biblical Interpretation' on the *Dialogue of Timothy and Aquila*. Cf. Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 17–18, 21.
 - 22 Most of the work done on these texts starts from such a perspective: Schreckenberg, *Adversus Judaeos-Texte*; Külzer, *Disputationes*. Robertson, *Dialogue of Timothy*, 50 sees the genre as conservative.
 - 23 *PG* 89:1203–74.
 - 24 Diekamp, *Doctrina Patrum*, lxxix–lxxx.
 - 25 See Uthemann, 'Philosophische Kapitel'.
 - 26 The Arabs are mentioned as conquerors and thus as a challenge to the idea of world peace brought by Christianity (*Trophies* § 2.3, ed. Bardy, 50), but they are not seen as a theological challenge: cf. Campos, 'La lutte contre l'idolâtrie'.
 - 27 *Trophies* § 2.1, ed. Bardy, 46.3. § 3.10, 259.4; *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 79, ed. Bonwetsch, 149.3.
 - 28 *Viae Dux* = *PG* 89:162.
 - 29 Van Nuffelen, *Penser la tolérance*, chap. 2; Van Nuffelen, 'Quest for the Right Argument'.
 - 30 *Proem*. § 2, ed. Bardy, 21: λεληθότως.
 - 31 *Proem*. § 3, ed. Bardy, 21: εἰρηνικῶς.
 - 32 *Trophies* §§ 2.7 and 3.6, ed. Bardy, 64, 77.
 - 33 *Trophies* § 3.8, ed. Bardy, 63: ὁ δὲ τοῦ λόγου ἐχόμενος Χριστιανὸς εἶπεν πρὸς τοὺς Ἰουδαίους: πάντας μὲν ὑμᾶς Χριστιανούς ποιῆσαι οὐ βούλομαι, μᾶλλον δὲ οὐ δύναμαι· πλὴν κακοὺς Ἰουδαίους ποιῶ ὑμᾶς. [. . .] ἄλλ' οὐν ὁ παρεστὼς νῦν λαὸς στηρίζεται καὶ οὐ μικρὰν ἐκ τοῦ παρόντος λόγου πορίζεται ὠφέλειαν.
 - 34 Van Nuffelen, *Penser la tolérance*, chap. 2 provides references.
 - 35 *Trophies* § 4.7, ed. Bardy, 105: ἀβάλα πόσων χοιραίων ἐστερήθημεν.
 - 36 E.g. Ambrose, *Expositio Psalmorum* LXVIII, 10.41; John Chrysostom, *In Acta Apostolorum*, 10.5 = *PG* 60:91–2. Compare Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1104b32.
 - 37 *Anonymus Dialogus cum Iudaeis*, 1.55 (ed. J.H. Declerck).
 - 38 *Trophies* §§ 2.4 and 2.8, ed. Bardy, 55, 64. Cf. *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 39, ed. Bonwetsch, 133.
 - 39 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 1, ed. Bonwetsch, 123: ἐν τοῖς ὁρίοις τῆς Ἀραβίας τοῖς κατὰ Δαμασκὸν καὶ Βόστραν διακειμένοις χωρίον ἐστὶ ὄνοματι Γασύμεος, ὅλον τῆς Ἰακώβου αἰρέσεως, ἐν ᾧ ὡς ἀπὸ δύο σταδίων κατὰ νότου στυλῆτις ἦν, τῆς αὐτῶν ὑπάρχων αἰρέσεως, τῆς Χριστοῦ δὲ ἐκκλησίας πρῶην ὑπάρχων ὁ πανάθλιος, Γαλάτης καὶ τῷ φρονήματι καὶ τῇ γενήσει, κατὰ τὸν ἐν παραδείσῳ ἐκεῖνον ὄφιν δεινώτατος καὶ πονηρώτατος καὶ φρονημώτατος, ἀπατῶν τε τοὺς ἀπλουστέρους τῇ ἐντέχνῳ πολλολογίᾳ, τῆς τε Συρίας καὶ Ἑλληνίδος διαλέκτου οὐχ ἄμοιρος οὔτε τῆς ἐξω φιλοσοφίας, μόνον δὲ ἄμοιρος τῆς ἀνωθεν ἀληθείας, λόγοις τε καὶ συλλογισμοῖς μικροῦ δεῖν δυνάμενος

- κατατοξεύειν καὶ τοὺς εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ, πάντῃ τε καὶ πάντοτε δηλώμασι καὶ γράμμασι πρὸς γνωρίμους τε καὶ ἀγνώστους κεχρημένους καὶ ἀπλῶς περιβόητος κατὰ πᾶσαν Ἀραβίαν ἐν τοῖς αἰρετικοῖς μάλιστα ὑπάρχων.
- 40 See *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 60, ed. Bonwetsch, 140.9 for a physical description of the Stylite as short, blond, slim, and having blue eyes.
- 41 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* §§ 12, 18, 27–9, 36, 40, ed. Bonwetsch, 126, 127, 130, 132, 133, 140. Cf. *Trophies* § 2.1, ed. Bardy, 46 where the use of diairetic reasoning by the Jews is challenged.
- 42 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 10, ed. Bonwetsch, 125–6: ὁρος ἐστὶ ταῦτα τὰ φαινόμενα ὄρη καὶ οἱ βουνοί.
- 43 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 65, ed. Bonwetsch, 143.
- 44 *Transition*, 113.12–13: οὐχ ὡς τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων ἐλλείψαντων τι ἐν τοῖς περὶ Χριστοῦ δόγμασιν, ἀλλ’ ἐπειδὴ νέα ἡμῖν καὶ κακότεχνα παρ’ αὐτῶν ἀνεφύησαν προβλήματα τε καὶ ἐξαπορίματα.
- 45 Cf. *Bonwetsch Dialogue* §§ 18, 29, 39, ed. Bonwetsch, 127, 130, 133.
- 46 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 2, ed. Bonwetsch, 124: ὑποκρινόμενος ταπεινώσιν καὶ ἁμαρτωλὸν ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζων, ὅπερ καὶ ἠλήθευεν.
- 47 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 4, ed. Bonwetsch, 124: πάντων γὰρ σχεδὸν τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ ἡ πλάνη κατεκράτησεν.
- 48 Augustine, *De mendacio*.
- 49 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 75: εἴτα ἂν κατὰ συγχώρησιν θεοῦ καὶ ὥσιν τὰ ἀμφοτέρω. For a hagiographical example of a trial by fire, see *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto*, 10.30–5: cf. Averil Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 26.
- 50 *Bonwetsch Dialogue* § 79, ed. Bonwetsch, 148–9: ταῦτά μοι σπουδῇ πάσῃ ἀναγράφεται, ἵνα μὴ λήθῃς βυθῷ τῷ χρόνῳ παραπεμφθῶσιν τὰ μνήμης ἐπάξια. διὸ ἀποροῦντες ἡμεῖς ἰδίων καμάτων, κἂν τοὺς ἐτέρων ἰδρώτας εὐφημοῦμεν τῷ λόγῳ ὥς οἱ ἐν θεάτρῳ καθήμενοι ταῖς φωναῖς τοὺς ἀθλητὰς ἐνισχύοντες, καὶ ἐξ αὐτῶν τὰ ἦθη καὶ τοὺς τρόπους τῆς πρὸς τοὺς ἐναντίους πάλης μαθηθάνοντες, ἵν’ ὅταν ποτὲ μετὰ Ἀκεφάλων ἢ Σευηριανῶν ἡμῖν ὁ λόγος γενήσεται τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ ἡμεῖς τῶν Ἰουλιανιστῶν ὑποδυσώμεθα, ὅπως αὐτοὺς ἐκ τῶν οἰκείων λόγων συμποδῇσωμεν.
- 51 Bonwetsch, ‘Ein antimonophysitischer Dialog’, 151. I leave aside the rather difficult issue of what ‘popular’ might mean in the seventh century.

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6 New wine in old wineskin

Byzantine reuses of the apocryphal revelation dialogue

Péter Tóth

‘What praise can a dialogue gain, if it cannot be attributed either to Plato or to Lucian’, asks George Scholarios in his fifteenth-century anti-Latin dialogue.¹ His question is simple and straightforward: is a dialogue without an obvious tribute to these two most important classical models of dialoguing inevitably doomed to be ‘praiseless’ and unworthy of record? The present paper addresses and challenges this question from a specific angle, when it focuses on a particular type of Byzantine dialogues, which may best be termed ‘apocryphal revelation dialogues’. These disputations between divine and human discussants, who converse in the form of a miraculous revelation in a typically biblical context – although they do not show an obvious indebtedness to Scholarios’s Platonic and Lucianic models – were still found worthy enough to be recorded and transmitted in many Byzantine manuscripts. This may mean, therefore, that, despite their non-classical, ‘apocryphal character’, they were still considered to be heirs of the classical dialogues whose ‘democratic’, ‘open-ended’ use is said to have disappeared in Christianity.² But they can also represent another, new type of dialogue or even a completely different literary genre that just happens to be in dialogue form, but has nothing to do with ‘real dialogues’. A satisfactory classification of these texts, however, can only be possible after we know a bit more about this under-studied realm of Byzantine literature. One of the most important aims of this paper, therefore, is to call attention to their existence and to (re-)vindicate a place for them in the history and corpus of Byzantine dialogues. By drawing a preliminary survey of the available texts, their contents, techniques and strategies, I would like to urge and also to initiate the systematic exploration of this literature.

The apocryphal revelation dialogue as a distinct literary form

The term ‘apocryphal revelation dialogue’ originates in German scholarship. It was probably Kurt Rudolph who first observed that one of the main generic peculiarities of the gnostic writings in the second to fourth centuries was that they communicate in a special dialogue format he termed revelatory discourse (*Offenbarungsdiskurs*) or revelatory instruction (*Offenbarungsvortrag*).³ The nature of this dialogue type is aptly illustrated by the beginning of the work known as the

Letter of Peter to Philip.⁴ The text depicts how the apostles gather on the Mount of Olives and experience a supernatural revelation of Christ.

Then Peter gathered the other (apostles). They went upon the mountain which is called 'the (mount) of Olives,' the place where they used to gather with the blessed Christ when he was in the body . . . Then a great light appeared so that the mountains shone from the sight of him who had appeared. And a voice called out to them saying: 'Listen to my words that I speak to you. Why are you asking me? I am Jesus Christ who am with you forever.'⁵

At this point a long discussion begins between the miraculously appearing divine figure and the amazed human characters, touching upon a number of doctrinal, cosmological and moral issues, which the *Letter of Peter* introduces as follows:

Then the apostles answered and said: 'Lord, we would like to understand the deficiency of the aeons and their fullness.' And: 'How are we detained in this dwelling place?' Or: 'How have we come to this place?' Also: 'In what way shall we leave?' Also: 'How do we possess the authority of boldness?' And: 'Why do the powers fight against us?'⁶

These queries, then, get their detailed treatment by Christ who, after finishing the instruction of his disciples, bids them to spread his words in the world and, again with lightning and thunder, disappears from their sight.

It was this scenario, systematically recurring in a number of gnostic texts,⁷ that Rudolph termed 'revelatory' discourse or instruction in his 1968 study. Later, in her 1980 monograph on this dialogue form, PHEME PERKINS reviewed Rudolph's arguments and amended the term as 'revelation dialogues' and distinguished a whole range of common characteristics, which these dialogues share in both their framework and their dialogic material.⁸

Before and parallel to Perkins's book, however, gnostic dialogues have been frequently described by others, such as Fallon, Puech, Vielhauer and Schneemelcher,⁹ as 'pseudo' or 'parabiblical' texts: 'apocryphal apocalypses' or 'gospels' and more recently, by Helmut Koester and Judith Hartenstein as 'dialogue-gospels' (*Dialog-gevangeliën*) or 'appearance-gospels' (*Erscheinungsevangelien*).¹⁰ It is on the basis of this twofold tradition, the one that regards these texts as a special type of dialogue-literature on the one hand, and the other that considers them 'parabiblical' or 'apocryphal' writings on the other, that I apply the term 'apocryphal revelation dialogue' to describe a corpus of texts that contain a pseudo-biblical visionary discussion between a divine and a human character conversing in a recognizably scriptural time and space.

Notwithstanding its striking popularity in the gnostic writings, apocryphal revelation dialogue as a genre is not a specifically gnostic phenomenon. Its use is attested in a number of orthodox, non- or explicitly anti-gnostic texts, too. An excellent example of a polemical use of this form against gnostic doctrines is preserved in the second-century *Epistle of the Apostles*.¹¹ This work also contains a

characteristic revelation dialogue, exactly in the tone of the gnostic writings, with an explicit intention to rebut gnostic views with their own weapons.¹² Another work, the *Questions of the Apostle Bartholomew to Christ*, seems to be uninfluenced by the gnostic controversies and was popular enough to be translated into Latin and Slavonic in the Middle Ages. It also records a revelatory discussion between the resurrected Christ and the Apostle Bartholomew on the incarnation, the devil and human salvation.¹³ Yet another piece from the fifth century, the so-called *Testament of the Lord*, is even further from the gnostic heritage, as it contains liturgical regulations and instructions of canon and secular law embedded in a revelation imparted to the apostles by Christ, again on the Mount of Olives.¹⁴

Given this ubiquitous presence of the revelation dialogue in almost all languages and layers of early mediaeval literature – used and employed for the most diverse authorial purposes, from the dissemination of gnostic ideas to their systematic refutation or simple Christological, moral or legal argumentation – it is no wonder that the ‘biblicity’ of these dialogues and their very pertinence to what is usually called the ‘apocrypha of the New Testament’ has nowadays been doubted.

In regard of the gnostic texts, Rudolph already questioned the pertinence of apocryphal revelation dialogue to the biblical or gospel genre. He rather viewed revelation dialogue as a Hellenistic literary form that developed from late antique question-and-answer manuals, the *Erotapokriseis*, which – on the hands of the gnostics – was ‘biblicised’ and transformed into ‘apocryphal revelation’.¹⁵ Although in the light of later research, focusing on the ‘apocryphicity’ of these texts, Rudolph’s views have been marginalised, nowadays revelation dialogues are being reconsidered. Instead of viewing them from a strictly biblical angle as special gospels or apocalypses, most recent scholarship is more inclined to re-assess the connections between gnostic revelations and the literature of questions-and-answers and view these revelations as a distinct literary, but not necessarily biblical, genre.¹⁶

Extirpating a genre in Byzantium

Parallel to the systematic suppression of the gnostic writings in the third and early fourth centuries, the production of new and the transmission of earlier revelation dialogues seems to have ceased drastically. The gnostic pieces, thoroughly indexed and stigmatised by the heresiologists, were condemned to general oblivion and, had their Coptic translations not been brought to light, they would certainly have been lost for good.

Curiously, however, together with the gnostic pieces, even the ‘orthodox’ revelation dialogues seem to have fallen out of favour. Despite their doctrinal ‘innocence’, none of the above-mentioned pieces have come down to us in their original Greek versions. The explicitly anti-gnostic dialogue of the *Epistle of the Apostles*, for example, was preserved only in Coptic and Ethiopic and in one tiny Latin fragment.¹⁷ The Greek original of the *Questions of Bartholomew* survived also very fragmentarily, as later insertion on the flyleaves of three interrelated manuscripts,¹⁸ whereas the *Testament of the Lord* is extant only in Syriac, Arabic

and Ethiopic translations with one single fragment of its original Greek recently discovered.¹⁹

Whether it was the gnostics' predilection towards this literary form or some other reason that made it so suspicious in the eyes of Byzantine theologians, their mistrust resulted in a complete extirpation of this once-so-popular literary form. There is only one branch of pseudo-biblical revelations that survived extinction: the eschatological revelation dialogue, represented by an all-time favourite, the *Apocalypse of Paul*.

The vision of Paul, which relates the apostle's rapture and subsequent encounter with the Archangel Michael, who shows him around in Heaven and Hell, was probably composed in Greek in the third century CE. This Greek *Apocalypse* was an apparent best seller, as it was translated into almost every language of the late antique Christian ecumene.²⁰

From the eighth century onwards, however, even the *Apocalypse of Paul* was becoming more and more suspicious in Byzantium. It was frequently denounced and indexed by Byzantine church authorities as harmful and 'apocryphal'.²¹ It was probably the distinguished intercessory power of the Archangel Michael on behalf of the sinners in hell that Byzantines found so disturbing with the *Apocalypse* that, by the middle Byzantine period, the Greek version of the apocalypse seems to have been completely marginalised: there are only two, heavily reworked and abbreviated, copies of its Greek text preserved.²²

A literature reborn

The suppression of the *Apocalypse of Paul* would probably have been the ultimate step of the gradual and complete extirpation of the earlier revelation dialogues in Byzantium if, at the turn of the eighth and the ninth centuries, the tradition had not popped up again in the form of a rewritten version of the *Apocalypse of Paul*. The new dialogue has again been set on the Mount of Olives as a conversation between the Archangel Michael and, this time, the Virgin Mary, and is entitled, accordingly, *The Apocalypse of the Virgin Mary*.²³

In her recent book on mediaeval Greek apocalypses, Jane Baun has aptly demonstrated how compilers of the Greek *Apocalypse of the Virgin* have tried to legitimise the framework and content of the *Apocalypse of Paul* by substituting the figure of the Apostle Paul with the Virgin Mary. With the Marian rewriting of the early apocalypse, they not only transformed the powerful figure of the Archangel Michael of the *Apocalypse of Paul* to that of a heavenly servant obediently answering Mary's questions but, in line with the developments of post-iconoclastic Byzantine theology, created a narrative encomium of the utmost intercessory power of the Virgin. Moreover, this new Byzantinised form of the apocalypse modernised the anachronistic moral content of the late antique apocryphon to reflect contemporary social trends. It now comprised every characteristic figure of a mediaeval Byzantine parish community: from lazy priests, corrupted stewards or unfaithful priests' wives to unforgiving bishops, merciless princes or negligent lectors.²⁴

The appearance of this upgraded version of the eschatological revelation dialogue in the eighth/ninth-century *Apocalypse of the Virgin* represents not only the genesis of an extremely successful text, usually described as the most popular and influential Byzantine apocryphon ever, but – and this is what interests us at the moment – it also marks the revival of the old revelatory genre in Byzantium. Although the new Byzantine *Apocalypse of the Virgin* is closely related to the eschatological branch of apocryphal revelations, especially to their manifestation in the *Apocalypse of Paul*, its structure as a genuine revelation dialogue on the Mount of Olives definitely attests to a renewed Byzantine interest in Early Christian revelations. This fascination with the revelation dialogue manifests itself in the emergence of a large and diverse group of new Byzantine apocrypha that employ this characteristic literary form to discuss not only eschatology and after-life, but – in close accordance with the earlier tradition – a much wider range of theological, legal and moral topics. It is to this corpus of mediaeval Byzantine apocrypha that I will turn in the second half of this paper.

Byzantine revelations with eschatological scope

Byzantine revelation dialogues can be divided into two major groups, one containing visions with a more manifest eschatological scope and another comprising revelations about various non-eschatological issues. The first group, that of the texts with eschatological perspective, contains three mediaeval Greek apocalypses that are situated in a New Testament scenario. These are the so-called *First Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* (CANT 331), the unedited *Third Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* (BHG 922k) and the *Dialogue of the Apostles John and James* (CANT 269). The first and most important piece in this group is the *First Apocryphal Apocalypse of John*. This apocalypse was probably the second most popular Byzantine apocryphon after the *Apocalypse of the Virgin*. It is preserved in more than twenty manuscripts and several mediaeval translations into Arabic, Armenian and Church Slavonic.²⁵ The exact date of this text is still debated; after earlier attempts to view it as an early Christian apocalypse, it has recently been placed to the mediaeval period around the eighth or ninth centuries.²⁶ In a recent article, however, on the basis of the lack of anti-Islamic references, Jean-Daniel Kaestli argues for an earlier date around the fifth/sixth centuries.²⁷

The document, as shown by its title, is closely related to the Johannine apocalyptic tradition and contains a rewritten or supplemented version of the biblical book of *Revelations* explicating its obscurities, but the literary form whereby this is achieved is new. This apocalypse, unlike the canonical *Book of Revelation* it is commenting on, is not an allegorical vision, but a *par excellence* revelation dialogue. The discussion takes place on Mount Thabor between the miraculously appearing Christ and the terrified John, who – after his first astonishment – addresses a series of questions to the divine figure asking him to reveal the exegetical message of his own *Book of Revelations*.²⁸ A large portion of John's questions, however, has almost nothing to do with eschatology. He enquires about

the number of angels and humans, or analyses the interesting epistemological problem of whether it was possible for the resurrected human soul to recognise others and remember its own past. The wording of these questions and especially Christ's answers to them stand very close to the style and the content of another, rather earthly dialogue-work, the *Quaestiones ad Antiochum ducem* from the seventh century.²⁹ This collection of questions and answers, attributed to Athanasius of Alexandria, contains a query about the recognition of the soul after the resurrection, which is formulated and answered in a strikingly similar way in both the *Quaestiones* and the *Apocalypse*.

<i>Apocalypse</i>	<i>Quaestiones ad Antiochum</i>
Lord, is it going to be possible in that world to recognize one another – a brother his brother, a friend his friend, a father his own children, or the children their own parents? The voice, which I heard said: Listen, John, for the righteous there is recognition, but definitely not for sinners. ³⁰	So we will not recognize each other there and brothers to brothers, parents to children, friends to friends will all remain unrecognizable? . . . I speak only about the souls of the sinners, they will not recognize each other. Whereas God has given recognition as a gift to the souls of the righteous. ³¹

The interesting view that the souls of sinners cannot recognise each other after the resurrection is a unique idea that has not been paralleled for in any other text. Equally striking is the coincidence in the treatment of another question about the number of angels and humans that comes up in a very similar wording in both the *Apocalypse* and the *Quaestiones*.

<i>Apocalypse</i>	<i>Quaestiones ad Antiochum</i>
And I said again: Lord, how great is the number of the angels? Which are more numerous, angels or human beings? The voice I heard told me: The human race is as numerous as the angels, just as the prophet said: He fixed the bounds of the peoples according to the number of God's Angels (Deut 32:8). ³²	What is the number of the angels, is it larger than the number of humanity? . . . Some say that angels and humans are exactly the same number, and they refer to the testimony saying He fixed the bounds of the peoples according to the number of God's Angels (Deut 32:8). ³³

This close relationship between the seventh-century *Quaestiones* and the *First Apocryphal Apocalypse of John*, observed first by Vassily Mochulsky in the nineteenth century, later in the Slavonic versions by Yavor Miltenov, and most recently in the treatment of the biblical citations by Laurance Vianes³⁴ has wide-reaching implications. It affects not only the dating of the revelation dialogue which, as it seems to borrow its material from the seventh-century *Ad Antiochum*, should

perhaps be related to the seventh/eighth centuries, as originally suggested, but also, and much more importantly, its literary evaluation. The close dependence of the *Apocalypse* on the *Quaestiones* seems to indicate a certain permeability between the two literary forms. The dry and impersonal series of questions and answers could easily be turned into a more lively dialogue form resulting in a, so-to-say, 'apocryphised' version of the *erōtapokriseis*.

Non-eschatological revelation dialogues

This impression is further supported by the pieces of the second, non-eschatological group of apocryphal revelation dialogues which, according to the present stage of my survey, contains four documents: *The Second Apocalypse of John* (CANT 332), the *Revelation on the Lord's Prayer* (BHG 821x–y), the *Didascalia of the Lord* (BHG 812a–e) and *The Dialogue of Mary and Christ on the Departure of the Soul*.³⁵

The first of the four, the so-called *Second Apocryphal Apocalypse of John*, is preserved in a considerable number of manuscripts disguised as a homily by John Chrysostom; hence, it is sometimes referred to as the *Apocalypse of John Chrysostom*.³⁶ The text describes an apocryphal encounter between Christ and the Apostle John, who, just as in the *First Apocryphal Apocalypse*, is constantly being addressed as, 'oh, my just John'.³⁷ In sharp contrast to that one, however, it is not the afterlife that interests the Apostle here.

The first part of the *Apocalypse*, right after the miraculous appearance of Christ before John, contains a list of sins and their penances, while the second part is a short commentary on the symbolic meaning of the church and the liturgy in a traditional question-and-answer format. Even the layout of the text, repeating, 'Now, oh Lord, tell me about: the church', 'the liturgy' and 'the antiphons' reminds of the style of the short *erōtapokriseis*-collections of late Byzantine manuscripts, where the questions are usually introduced by short rubrics containing exactly the same headings as the questions of John in the *Apocalypse*.³⁸ A further look at the content of the text confirms this impression. The wording of John's liturgical questions, and especially Christ's symbolic explanations of the church building and the liturgical actions therein, come up in a very similar form in some liturgical *erōtapokriseis*.³⁹

<i>Apocalypse</i>	<i>Erōtapokriseis</i>
John said: 'Lord, what are the symbols of the church?' The Lord said: Listen, righteous John, the gates are the head of God, the sanctuary is the tomb of the Lord, the holy table is the Lord's breast, the ambo is the stone that was rolled away from the entrance of the tomb. ⁴⁰	What is the church; what is the sanctuary, what is the holy table? The church is the house of God, the sanctuary is the Lord's tomb, the holy table is the guarding of the tomb, the ambo is the stone that was rolled away from the entrance of the tomb. ⁴¹

Even this very short analysis of the liturgical material in the *Second Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* seems to corroborate the observation we previously made regarding the *First Apocryphal Apocalypse* that these apocryphal revelation dialogues appear to be dialogised or ‘apocryphised’ versions of *erōtapokriseis*, of which many different versions are preserved in later Byzantine manuscripts.

Another revelation dialogue of this group, the apocryphal discussion between Christ and the Apostle Peter on the interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer, also confirms this view.⁴² The repeated questions of the apostle in the text, asking ‘what is *thy kingdom come?*’, ‘what is *hallowed be thy name?*’, etc. are also standard features of the ‘erotapokritic’ genre, where the Lord’s prayer was very frequently discussed.⁴³ An important characteristic of these ‘Our-Father *erōtapokriseis*’ is that they explicate the prayer by dissecting it into short blocs, which are reformulated as questions, such as διὰ τί τὸ ἁγιασθῆτω, to be ‘answered’ in the following paragraph.⁴⁴

The revelation dialogue between Peter and Christ follows the very same pattern. The Apostle’s questions divide the prayer into the same textual units as the *erōtapokriseis*. These blocs, formatted as Peter’s questions to Christ, are explained similarly in the form of ‘answers’ that now come from Christ himself. But the connection between the two genres becomes even more explicit in the dramaturgical mistakes of the text. In one of the answers, for example, the compiler makes Christ refer to himself in first person plural and at another place even in third person as ‘our Lord Jesus Christ’.⁴⁵ The most telling case, however, is probably when, instead of naming the speakers of his dialogue, the author simply introduces the speeches as ‘question’ and ‘answer’ and entitles the whole text as ‘*erōtapokriseis on Our Father*’.⁴⁶ This close structural overlap between the revelation dialogue and the ‘Our-Father *erōtapokriseis*’ reflects not only a close conceptual link between the two, but also and more importantly a direct dependence of the revelation on the *erōtapokriseis* as its rewritten, ‘apocryphised’ version. It reveals a literary process, whereby the impersonal questions and answers of the *erōtapokriseis*-collections were recast and ‘animated’ as pseudo-biblical dialogues.

The other two revelations of the non-eschatological group illustrate this same development. The first text, entitled as *Teaching or Constitution (Didascalia) of the Lord*, contains another typical example of a revelation dialogue.⁴⁷ It begins as the twelve apostles gather at the valley of Josaphat and encounter a luminous angelic being, whom they soon recognise as Christ and immediately start questioning about Sunday observance, the Eucharist and the retribution of sins.⁴⁸ Although a full examination of the lengthy conversation that follows afterwards requires more thorough comparative work, the Saviour’s detailed list of sins and penances, which constitutes the main part of this dialogue, seems to have its closest parallels in legal *erōtapokriseis* that often contain such registers.⁴⁹

The importance of the *Didascalia*, however, stands not only in its conceptual overlap with Byzantine questions-and-answers collections, which we have observed in many other texts already, but rather in its special historical framework,

which provides another important insight into the genesis of these revelations, as it has a very close parallel in the rich literature on the Virgin's dormition. The various accounts on the translation of Mary's body to Paradise describe how the twelve apostles gather beside her tomb in the valley of Josaphat waiting for Christ to appear and take his mother's body with him. As they are sitting at the entrance of the Virgin's grave, they have a lengthy debate about the most efficient way of preaching the gospel, whereby they criticise Paul for his indulgent approach towards pagans. Suddenly, Christ appears before them and, reproaching the others for their remarks, approves Paul's mission to the heathens and elevates the body of the Virgin, together with the Apostles, in a cloud and shows them the secrets of heaven and hell.⁵⁰

It is this particular scene that the *Didascalia* appears to reuse when it sets the dialogue between Christ and the twelve disciples in the valley Josaphat after Christ's Ascension. In one of its manuscripts, the *Didascalia* even contains a tour of hell, which is very similar to the one described in the *Ethiopic Dormition*, as it also depicts the torments of a sinful priest, deacon, reader and steward in hell, exactly as related by the Ethiopic text.⁵¹ So the Byzantine revelation, just like the *Apocalypse of the Virgin* or the Johannine texts, appears to be reusing an earlier biblical, 'apocryphal' scenario to frame its peculiar doctrinal and legal message, and it may even preserve traces of the now-lost Greek version of this portion of the Dormition.

The last non-eschatological revelation is a short text I found in two manuscripts of the fifteenth/sixteenth centuries.⁵² It records a post-resurrection discussion between Christ and the Virgin Mary on the Mount of Olives about the departure of the soul from the body, attributed to the Apostle John.⁵³ The conversation between Mary and Christ before her departure from the world on the Mount of Olives is well attested in the rich literary tradition of the Virgin's dormition. Its fullest version has been preserved in the Ethiopic *Book of Dormition*, the *Liber Requiei*. Here Christ reveals a number of secrets to his mother regarding their life in Egypt, Galilee and also about the fate of the souls after death, traces of which are preserved in the Greek and Georgian versions of the narrative alike.⁵⁴ As shown by the following comparison, it is this tradition that the newly discovered revelation dialogue seems to be related to.

This query in the Dormition narratives about the fate of the soul after death and the arrival of the Christ-Angel to transfer it to heavens stands very close to what Mary asks in the revelation dialogue about the fate of the souls of the dying.⁵⁵ The answers she obtains from Christ, with a detailed description of the look and number of the angels and of the way they carry the soul through the gates of Paradise, however, have no parallel in the Marian apocrypha.⁵⁶ Given the context of this dialogue in its two extant manuscripts, surrounded by a massive collection of *erōtapokriseis*,⁵⁷ together with the fact that even the text itself is structured and entitled as a series of questions and answers between Christ and the Virgin,⁵⁸ it may not come as a surprise if its closest doctrinal parallels would also be found in 'erotapokritic' texts. If this assumption is right, the *Dialogue of Mary and Christ on the Departure of the Soul* would constitute another example of the literary

<i>Ethiopic Dormition</i>	<i>Georgian Dormirion</i>	<i>Greek Dormition 1</i>	<i>Greek Dormition 2</i>	<i>Revelation Dialogue</i>
And Mary said to him, 'O my Lord, with what sign will you come to them, and what is the sign of those who will be brought? Do they offer a sweet-smelling sacrifice, and thus you come to them, or when you pass among the just, and they have come, do they call your name, and you come to them?' ⁵⁹	And Mary said to him, 'O my Lord, in what manner do you come to them, or whom do you lead? Those to whom you are [coming], do they offer you their aromatic sacrifice, and thus you will come to them? Or rather, do you come to the just? Or does he send [you] to the good? Or do you not come only to the elect? Or do they call on your name in prayers, and they come to you?' ⁶⁰	Mary said to him, 'Lord, how do you come to them, or who are those that you transfer? Do they distinguish themselves and offer sweet-smelling sacrifices, and thus you come to them? Or rather do you come to the righteous or to the elect? Or, when you are sent, do you come to those who call upon your name while praying?' ⁶¹	Mary said to him: 'Lord, in what form do you come to the elect. Please tell me how it is.' ⁶²	'The Question of the Most Holy Mother of God to our Lord Jesus Christ when he appeared unto her on the Mount of Olives regarding the just and the sinners [recorded] by John the Theologian. <i>Question:</i> The angels, who are sent for the souls, oh Lord, what is their number?' ⁶³

process documented above, whereby various series of questions and answers are transformed into pseudo-biblical revelations that are modelled on earlier biblical and apocryphal dialogues.

Concluding with the beginning?

Drawing such wide-reaching conclusions from a short and preliminary survey of the rich Byzantine material of revelation dialogues may perhaps look a bit premature, but even on the basis of the observations hitherto gained, there certainly are a number of common patterns and tendencies that these revelations share.

As observed in the case of the Johannine material, the *Apocalypse of the Virgin Mary*, the *Didascalia* and the *Dialogue of Mary and Christ*, Byzantine revelation dialogues obviously tend to set themselves in an already existing scriptural and/

or apocryphal framework. The Johannine writings rely on the canonical *Apocalypse of John*, whereas other dialogues make use of the *Apocalypse of Paul* and the *Dormition of the Virgin Mary*. They systematically reuse these earlier texts, expanding and filling their structure with new content and meaning. In this sense, therefore, Byzantine revelations are 'apocryphal' as they may and probably do preserve traces of early 'apocryphal' traditions and works that have not come down to us.

Even more important, however, is the close structural and conceptual relationship between Byzantine revelations and the various 'erotapokritic' collections. As often emphasised above, the dialogues of the biblical protagonists in these revelations have not only been influenced by but probably even borrowed from various collections of *erotapokriseis*. In the light of this interdependence, then, revelation dialogues appear to form a distinct stage in what seems to be a special Byzantine way of restructuring and transferring knowledge. At the beginning of this process, information is extracted from longer argumentative texts and restructured as concise series of general and/or thematic sets of questions and answers. Later, these collections were, as observed above, 'animated' by being rephrased as human questions and divine answers of pseudo-biblical revelation dialogues. Why, when and how this process started, who were its initiators, what their purposes and targeted audience may have been, are questions that can only be answered after a thorough systematic study of this material is carried out. What we can certainly conclude, however, is that the 'new wine' of middle and late Byzantine theology and argumentation has obviously not burst the old wineskin of apocryphal revelation dialogues. Instead, it brought a Byzantine revival of this ancient dialogue form resulting in the appearance of a number of new dialogic texts that still await their full literary and historical evaluation.

Notes

- 1 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Siderides, 3:12: καὶ πῶς τις λοιπὸν ἐπαινέσεται τὸν διάλογον τουτονί, μήτε Πλάτωνι προστιθέναι, μήτ' εἰς Λουκιανὸν ἀναφέρειν δυνάμενος;
- 2 Clark, 'Can We Talk?', 132–3: 'Christianity closed down open-ended discussion among equals of a range of options'.
- 3 Rudolph, *Gnostische 'Dialog'*.
- 4 The text is preserved in Coptic in the Nag Hammadi Codex VIII and the newly discovered Codex Tchacos; it was edited by Marvin Meyer.
- 5 *Letter of Peter to Philip*, 132.12–17 and 134.10–18, ed. and trans. Meyer, 18–21.
- 6 *Letter of Peter to Philip*, 134.19–135.2, ed. and trans. Meyer, 21.
- 7 In addition to the *Letter of Peter*, the same pattern occurs in works such as the *Sophia of Jesus Christ* (CPG 1189); *Apocryphon of John* (CPG 1180); *Gospel of Mary* (CPG 1223); *Hypostasis of the Archons* (CPG 1183); *(First) Apocalypse of James* (CPG 1192); *Apocalypse of Peter* (CPG 1205); *Pistis Sophia* (CPG 1225); *Book of Thomas the Contender* (CPG 1186); *Dialogue of the Savior* (CPG 1190); *First and Second Books of Jeu* (CPG 1226).
- 8 Cf. Perkins, *Gnostic Dialogue*, 26–31.
- 9 Fallon, 'Gnostic Apocalypses'; Puech, 'Gnostische Evangelien'; Vielhauer, *Geschichte*, 680–82; Schneemelcher, 'Dialoge des Erlösers', 189–91.

- 10 Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels*, 173–5 and idem, ‘Überlieferung und Geschichte’, 1474–5; Hartenstein, *Zweite Lehre*, 27–31 and eadem, ‘Erscheinungsevangelien’.
- 11 Cf. the synoptic edition of the extant Coptic and Ethiopic version by Schmidt, *Gespräche Jesu*, and their English translation by Taylor, ‘Epistle of the Apostles’.
- 12 The long discussion is formatted as a continuation of the first encounter between the resurrected Christ and his apostles in Lk 24:38–41 that the text introduces as follows (*Epistle of the Apostle* § 12; cf. the edition by Schmidt, *Gespräche Jesu*, 42–5 and the English translation by Taylor, ‘Epistle of the Apostles’, 563): ‘we touched him, that we might learn of the truth whether he were risen in the flesh; and we fell on our faces confessing our sin, that we had been unbelieving. Then said our Lord and Saviour unto us: Rise up, and I will reveal unto you . . .’. For the anti-gnostic content of the text, see the analysis by Hartenstein, *Zweite Lehre*, 97–126.
- 13 The discussion in the earliest Greek version of the text is placed, characteristically, between the resurrection and ascension of Christ and begins with the apostle’s question saying. *Questions of the Apostle Bartholomew* § 1, ed. Wilmart and Tisserant, 170: μετὰ τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, προσελθὼν ὁ Βαρθολομαῖος τὸν κύριον ἐπερωτᾷ λέγων· ἀποκάλυψόν μοι, κύριε, τὰ μυστήρια τῶν οὐρανῶν, trans. Elliott, 655: ‘After the resurrection from the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ, Bartholomew came unto the Lord and questioned him: Lord, reveal unto me the mysteries of the heavens’.
- 14 Cf. the beginning of the Syriac version, *Testamentum Domini*, ed. Rahmani, 2–4, trans. Cooper and Maclean, 49–50: ‘After our Lord rose from the dead and appeared unto us . . . falling on our faces we blessed the Father of the new world and being held in very great fear, we waited prostrate as infants that speak not, but Jesus lifted us up, saying: “Why has your heart thus fallen” . . . and we started to question him saying: “Lord, what is the Holy Spirit, what is his power. . . ?”’.
- 15 Cf. Rudolph, ‘Gnostische Dialog’, 86–90.
- 16 Cf., for example, such recent studies as Kaler, ‘Just How Close’, or Piovanelli, ‘Entre oralité et (ré)écriture’.
- 17 For the various versions, see Schmidt, *Gespräche Jesu*, 4–22.
- 18 For the complicated transmission of this work, see the latest survey by Marksches, ‘Bartholomaeustraditionen’.
- 19 Cf. the detailed analysis in Coquin, ‘Testamentum Domini’ on the Oriental tradition and Corcoran and Salway, ‘Newly Identified Greek Fragment’ on the recently discovered Greek fragment.
- 20 See the recent survey of the transmission of this text by Jirouskova, *Die Visio Pauli*, with a special focus on the mediaeval vernacular versions.
- 21 Cf. Patriarch Nikephoros, *Canons*, 3 and 4, PG 100:852 and the material assembled in Fabricius, *Codex Apocryphus*, 943–53.
- 22 These manuscripts (Monacensis graecus 276, fols. 132–49 and Ambrosianus graecus C 255 inf., fols. 218–28) are edited and described by Tischendorf, *Apocalypses*, xiv–xviii.
- 23 The beginning of the text is very similar to the framework of the early revelations as it is also set on the Mount of Olives: *Apocalypse of the Virgin* § 1, ed. Syrtzova, 226: ἡμελλεν ἡ παναγία θεοτόκος πορεύεσθαι πρὸς τὸ ὄρος τῶν Ἐλαιῶν τοῦ προσεύξεσθαι [. . .] εἶπεν [. . .] κατεθάτω ὁ ἀρχάγγελος Μιχαὴλ, ὅπως εἴπῃ μοι περὶ τῶν ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων καὶ κατῆλθεν Μιχαὴλ [. . .] καὶ ἡ κεχαριτομένη ἤρξατο δέεσθαι· Ἀνάγγελον μοι τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς πάντα [. . .]; trans. Baun, *Tales from Another Byzantium*, 391: ‘The Holy Mother of God was about to go to the Mount of Olives to pray and she said . . . let the Archangel Michael come down that he may speak to me concerning things in heaven and earth and in the nether regions . . . And Michael came down and saluted her . . . And the Virgin said: Make known to me everything that is on earth . . .’. And thus the dialogue begins.
- 24 Cf. Baun, *Tales from Another Byzantium*, 79–91.

- 25 The Greek text has been published by Tischendorf, *Apocalypses*, 70–93; an English translation is available in Court, *The Book of Revelation*, 23–63, while the other versions, except for transcriptions of some manuscripts, are unedited, cf. CANT 331 and De Santos Otero, *Handschriftliche Überlieferung*, 197–209.
- 26 For an earlier dating, cf. Bousset, *Antichrist Legend*, 42–3 and for a more recent one Whealey, ‘The Apocryphal Apocalypse of John’.
- 27 Kaestli, ‘La figure de l’Antichrist’.
- 28 Cf. the characteristic ‘revelatory’ beginning of the *Apocalypse of John* § 1, ed. Tischendorf, 70: μετὰ τὴν ἀνάληψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ παρεγενόμεν ἐγὼ Ἰωάννης μόνος ἐπὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Θαβώρ, ἔνθα καὶ τὴν ἄκραντον αὐτοῦ θεότητα ὑπέδειξεν ἡμῖν, καὶ μὴ δυνηθέντος μου στήναι ἔπεσα ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν καὶ ἠϋξάμην πρὸς κύριον καὶ εἶπον· κύριε ὁ θεὸς μου [. . .] δίδαξόν με περὶ τῆς ἐλευσεώς σου· ὅταν μέλλῃς ἔρχεσθαι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τί μέλλει γενέσθαι; ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ καὶ ὁ ἥλιος καὶ ἡ σελήνη τί μέλλουσι γενέσθαι ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς ἐκείνοις; ἀποκάλυψόν μοι πάντα; trans. Court, 33: ‘After the ascension (resurrection in Slavonic) of our Lord Jesus Christ, I John found myself alone on Mount Thabor. There he showed us the undefiled fullness of his divinity. I was unable to stand but fell on the earth and prayed: Oh Lord, teach me about your coming. What will happen when you are to come? How will heaven and earth be affected? Reveal everything to me . . .’. For the text as a ‘dialogic commentary’ on the Book of Revelations, see Valeriani, ‘L’artefice di iniquita’, 93–6.
- 29 The dating of this extremely influential collection preserved in hundreds of manuscripts and dozens of translations all over the mediaeval world is still debated. Recent research, however, tends to place it to the late seventh century, cf., for example, Macé, ‘Les Quaestiones ad Antiochum’ and, most recently from a different angle, Roggema and De Vos, ‘Ps. Athanasius of Alexandria’.
- 30 *Apocalypse of John* § 12, ed. Tischendorf, 79: Κύριε, ἔστιν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐκείνῳ γνωρίσαι ἀλλήλους, ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφόν, ἢ φίλος τὸν φίλον, πατὴρ τὰ ἴδια τέκνα; ἄκουσον Ἰωάννη· τοῖς μὲν δικαίοις γνωρισμὸς γίνεται, τοῖς δὲ ἁμαρτωλοῖς οὐδαμῶς; trans. Court, 37.
- 31 Ps.-Athanasius, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum*, QA 22 = PG 28:610–12: οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκομεν ἀλλήλους ἐκεῖ, ἀλλὰ ἀγνωρίστοι ἀδελφοὶ ἀδελφοῖς, καὶ πατέρες υἱοῖς; Ψυχῶν τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν, ὅτι ἑαυτὰς οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκουσι. Ταῖς γὰρ τῶν δικαίων ψυχαῖς ὁ Θεὸς ἐπιγνωρίσμων ἐδωρήσατο; my trans.
- 32 *Apocalypse of John* § 26, ed. Tischendorf, 91: καὶ πάλιν εἶπον· Κύριε, πόσον ἐστὶν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀγγέλων; καὶ ποῖόν ἐστιν πλεόν, τῶν ἀγγέλων ἢ τῶν ἀνθρώπων; ὅσον ἐστὶν τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀγγέλων, τόσον ἐστὶν τὸ γένος τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ προφήτης· ἔστησεν ὄρια ἐθνῶν κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων θεοῦ. trans. Court, 45.
- 33 Ps.-Athanasius, *Quaestiones ad Antiochum* QA 6 = PG 28:601–3: πόσος δὲ ἄρα τῶν ἀγγέλων ὁ ἀριθμὸς ὑπάρχει ὑπὲρ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος; ἰσαριθμούς λεγουσι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους, φέροντες εἰς μαρτυρίαν τό· ἔστησεν ὄρια ἐθνῶν κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλων· Θεοῦ; my trans.
- 34 Cf. Mochulsky, *Следы народной Библии*, 202–4, Miltenov, ‘Апокрифният апокалипсис’ and Vianes, ‘Les citations bibliques’.
- 35 This latter piece is not registered yet; I have identified it in two manuscripts: Athens, *Εθνικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη τῆς Ελλάδος*, MS 2187, fols. 155v–156r (fifteenth century); Dresden, *Sächsische Landesbibliothek*, MS A 187, 243–4 (sixteenth century).
- 36 See the short survey in its first edition by Nau, ‘Deuxième Apocalypse’ and Court, *Book of Revelation*, 67–73.
- 37 Cf. the characteristic beginning of the text in *Second Apocalypse of John* § 1, ed. Krasnoseltzev, 98: προσελθὼν Ἰωάννης ὁ θεολόγος τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ, εἶπεν· Κύριε, ὑπέ μοι πῶσε ἁμαρτία ἦστίν, καὶ πεία ἁμαρτία ἀσυγχώριτος ἐστὶν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις; my trans.: ‘Saint John the Theologian stepped forth and seeing the Lord he prostrated himself before him and said: Oh Lord, tell me how many sins there

are and which remain unforgivable in the world? And the Savior started to speak as follows . . .’.

- 38 Cf. John’s questions asking about the liturgy, the altar, the antiphons, etc. in the *Second Apocalypse of John* §§ 22–30, ed. Krasnoseltzev, 99: εἰπέ μοι, Κύριε, καὶ περὶ τῆς λειτουργίας [. . .] Κύριε, εἰπέ μοι καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀντιφώνων, τίνες εἰσὶν; ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης εἶπεν· εἰπέ μοι, Κύριε, καὶ περὶ τοῦ προκειμένου, which stand very close to the wording of a liturgical *erōtapokriseis* in Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plut. 56.13, fol. 19v having rubrics in the very same format like περὶ τοῦ κιβωρίου, τί ἔστιν; περὶ τοῦ βήματος, τί ἔστιν βῆμα etc.
- 39 Although Byzantine commentaries on the liturgy have been analysed in works such as Bornert, *Les commentaires*, their later re-use in collections of questions and answers, apart from some preliminary research by Mochulsky (*Следы народной Библии*, 138–40), and the recent work on the Slavonic versions by Afanasieva (*Древнеславянские толкования*), has not yet been explored systematically. So all I could rely on was some Greek manuscripts and their nineteenth-century transcripts published by Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 73–5.
- 40 *Second Apocalypse of John* § 20, ed. Krasnoseltzev, 99: ὁ δὲ Ἰωάννης εἶπεν· Κύριε, τὰ ἀντίτυπα τῆς ἐκκλησίας, ὁ δὲ Κύριος εἶπεν· ἄκουσον, δίκαιε Ἰωάννη, οἱ κοχοὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔστιν ἡ κορυφή τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ βῆμα ἔστιν τὸ μνήμα τοῦ Κυρίου, ἡ τράπεζα τὸ στήθος τοῦ Κυρίου, ὁ ἄμβων ὁ λίθος ὁ ἀποκυλισθεὶς ἐκ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνημείου; my trans. Nau’s text has a lacuna at this place.
- 41 *Various Questions and Answers On Priests*, ed. Krasnoseltzev, 74: διὰ τί ἐκκλησία, καὶ διὰ τί βῆμα, διὰ τί τράπεζα; ἡ μὲν ἐκκλησία ἔστιν ὁ οἶκος τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸ δὲ βῆμα ἔστιν τὸ μνήμα Κυρίου [. . .] ἡ τράπεζα τοῦ τάφου ἡ ἀσφάλεια, ὁ δὲ ἄμβων ὁ ἀποκυλισθεὶς λίθος ἐκ τῆς θύρας τοῦ μνήματος [. . .].
- 42 The text has been published by Krasnoseltzev (*Addenda*, 90–8) from two manuscripts at the monastery of Koutloumousiou, yet another manuscript has been identified by the Bollandists in BHG 812y. Krasnoseltzev’s first version of the revelation (*Addenda*, 90) begins as ὅτε κατήλθεν ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐκ τοῦ οὐρου μετὰ στρατιάς ἀγγέλων καὶ ἐφανίσθη ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων [. . .] καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν αὐτοὺς καὶ λέγειν τὸ ἅγιον Πατερ ἡμῶν; my trans.: ‘When our Lord Jesus Christ has descended from heaven accompanied by the angelic hosts and appeared before his disciples, he started to teach them the *Our Father* . . .’. The other recension of the work places the scene, characteristically, to the Mount of Olives, cf. Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 94.
- 43 Cf. the short survey by Mochulsky, *Следы народной Библии*, 140 and the detailed discussion in Miltenova, *Erotapokriseis*, 123–50.
- 44 This is the usual layout of the *erōtapokriseis* in the manuscripts, such as Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plut. 7.19, fols. 72r and 73r; Plut. 59.13, fols. 70v–72r and Monacensis graecus 252, fols. 220v–221r. The blocs are always the same, but they are termed either as ‘question and answer’ (ἐρώτησις—ἀπόκρισις) or ‘text and explanation’ (κείμενον—ἐρμηνεία).
- 45 He answers Peter’s request with saying that ‘oh beloved brothers, we all have to amend our lives’ (cf. Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 92: καὶ ἡμεῖς, ἀδελφοί, ἡδὴ, σωφρονισθῶμεν) and at another place he explicates the phrase ‘hallowed be thy name’ by a reference to the liturgy where ‘they can partake the venerable body of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 91: λαμβάνουσιν τοῦ τιμίου σώματος τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).
- 46 Here Peter’s name is missing and his question is formatted simply as ‘*Question*: Our daily bread?—*Answer*: Listen, o my beloved Peter’ (Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 96–7: ἐρώτησις· τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον;—ἀπόκρισις· ἄκουσον, ἀγαπητέ μου Πέτρε [. . .]) and the whole text begins as ‘questions and answers about the Our Father’ (Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 94: ἐρωταποκρίσεις περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πάτερ ἡμῶν).

- 47 The text was first edited by Nau, 'Didascalie' from two manuscripts, one in Paris (Parisinus graecus 929, 480–501) and another in the Vatican (Vaticanus graecus 2072, fols. 179r–182v). Another manuscript was found on the Mount Athos by Krasnoseltzev, *Addenda*, 84–90 (St Andrew's Skete, No 96.) and a new one on Patmos (St John's Monastery, 379) by Jagič, 'Ότчет'. I have identified four others from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries that would necessitate a new critical edition of the text (Atheniensis 1021, fols. 145v–155v; Oxoniensis Rawlinson 64, fols. 123v–132v; Ambrosianus G 63. Sup., fols. 174v–176v; Parisinus graecus 930, fols. 37v–46r).
- 48 The framework of the discussion is set (as edited by Jagič, 'Ότчет', 272) 'in the days following the resurrection – in other versions (Nau, 'Didascalie,' 230), ascension – of the Lord and his appearance before his holy disciples and Apostles and also after his ascension to [*sic*] the Mount of Olives, when the twelve disciples descended into the valley of Josaphat where, after they were fasting for forty days, they got an ecstasy of ten days. At the dawn of the upcoming Friday, the angel of the Lord stood before them saying: 'Be confident' . . . But Andrew said: 'Lord, I recognize you, you are our teacher, your words betray you to be Christ, the Son of the Living God, but you appeared unto us in the form of an angel'. . . . When the Lord heard this he revealed himself completely unto them and they started to question him . . . '.
- 49 Cf. the question by the Apostle Paul in the *Didascalia* (ed. Jagic, 'Ότчет', 273) when he 'stepped forward and asked the angel about the adulterers and homosexuals. And the angel said: "They have no excuse. All have to go to the fiery river where the worm never sleeps, unless they repent. In that case homosexuals must hold a fast of 12 years, adulterers 3 years, harlots 8 years, those who masturbate 9 years. . . ." A very similar list can be found in the so-called *Canons of St. Basil the Great* (Potles and Rhalles, *Σύνταγμα*, 404–6).
- 50 The fullest form of this narrative is preserved in the longest and possibly earliest Ethiopic book of the Virgin's dormition, called the *Liber Requiei*, §§ 78–136, but its abbreviated form is known in Syriac, Greek, Latin and Irish, too. For a synoptic presentation of this material, see Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions*, 332–50 and the comparative table on 415–18.
- 51 It is MS Parisinus graecus 929, fols. 499–501 as published by Nau, 'Une didascalie', 242–3 which parallels the condemned reader, deacon and priest of the Ethiopic (Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions*, 344–5) and the teacher, priest, elder and judge in the Irish version (Herbert and McNamara, *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*, 130).
- 52 For the manuscripts, see n. 53 and 62 below.
- 53 The text begins, characteristically as a dialogue on the Mount of Olives, as, 'The Question of the Most Holy Mother of God to our Lord Jesus Christ when he appeared unto her on the Mount of Olives regarding the just and the sinners [recorded] by John the Theologian. *Question*: The angels, who are sent for the souls, oh Lord, what is their number? . . . ' (Atheniensis 2187, fol. 155v and Dresden A 187, 243: 'ἐρώτησις τῆς ὑπεραγίας θεοτόκου πρὸς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ὅτε ἐφάνη αὐτῇ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν περὶ δικαίων καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν. Ἰωάννου τοῦ θεολόγου. ἐρώτησις· οἱ ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν πεμπόμενοι ἄγγελοι, κύριε ποταποὶ εἰσὶν'; my translation.)
- 54 For a synoptic presentation of the Mount-of-Olives dialogue in the various traditions, see Shoemaker, *Ancient Traditions*, 415 and more recently Norelli, 'Premières Traditions'.
- 55 After the first question of the Virgin about the number of angels sent to the dying (οἱ ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν πεμπόμενοι ἄγγελοι, κύριε ποταποὶ εἰσὶν), her second query is about the way the angels lead the souls from the body (Κύριε μου Ἰησοῦ· ὅταν ἐξάγους ψυχὰς ἐκ τῶν σωμάτων οἱ ἄγγελοι, ποίαν ὁδὸν πορεύονται),; for the manuscripts, see n. 53 above.
- 56 In contrast to the Virgin's questions in the apocryphal Dormition-narratives, where Christ's answers concentrate on the personal fate of the Virgin herself, the revelation

- dialogue depicts a more general view. It reveals that sixty black angels surround the dying and carry the soul through the gate of Paradise. This gate, as Christ argues in the text, is situated exactly at the Mount of Olives, where they converse, and is not identical to the twelve gates through which the sun and the hours travel. It is at this point that the discussion ends abruptly with a doxology.
- 57 Both the Athens and the Dresden manuscripts are devoted to erotapokriseis, only, containing a very wide selection of liturgical, eschatological and exegetical collections. Cf. their descriptions in Politis, *Κατάλογος*, 213–18, who mistakenly connects the dialogue to the *Apocalypse of the Virgin*, and the study on the Dresden codex by von Dobschütz ('Sammelhandschrift'), who compares it to the *Dialogue of the Apostles John and James* (CANT 269).
 - 58 The dialogue is entitled in both manuscripts as *the ἐρώτησις* of the Virgin Mary, and the sequence of the questions and answers are clearly marked on the margin in the usual way as ἐρώτησις – ἀπόκρισις.
 - 59 Arras, *De transitu*, 11, trans. Shoemaker, 297.
 - 60 Esbroeck, 'Apocryphes géorgiens', 71, trans. Shoemaker, 297.
 - 61 Wenger, *L'Assomption*, 212: Κύριε, ποίῳ τρόπῳ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἔρχῃ ἢ τίνας μεταφέρει?; Μὴ οἱ διαφέροντες ἐν αὐτοῖς θυσίας προσφέρουσιν εὐωδίας καὶ οὕτως ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἢ μᾶλλον ἐπὶ τοὺς δικαίους ἔρχῃ ἢ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς, ἢ ἀποστελλόμενοι οἱ εὐχόμενοι ἐπικαλοῦνται τὸ ὄνομά σου καὶ ἔρχῃ ἐπ' αὐτούς; trans. by Shoemaker, *Ancient traditions*, 355.
 - 62 Jugie, *Homelies mariales*, 380: Τότε λέγει αὐτῷ Μαρία: Κύριέ μου, ποίῳ τύπῳ ἔρχῃς πρὸς τοὺς ἐκλεκτούς; my trans.
 - 63 MS Athenienis 2187, fol. 155v and Dresden A 187, 243: ἐρώτησις τῆς ὑπεραγίας θεοτόκου πρὸς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ὅτε ἐφάνη αὐτῇ εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν περὶ δικαίων καὶ ἁμαρτωλῶν. Ἰωάννου τοῦ θεολόγου. ἐρώτησις: οἱ ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν πεμπόμενοι ἄγγελοι, κύριε ποταποὶ εἰσὶ?; my trans.

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7 Dialogical pedagogy and the structuring of emotions in *Liber Asceticus*

*Ioannis Papadogiannakis**

The *Liber Asceticus* (*LA*, λόγος ἀσκητικός) is one of the least-studied works by Maximus the Confessor.¹ Characterised as one of the most captivating works in the entire Christian literature of spirituality (‘une des oeuvres les plus captivantes de toute la littérature spirituelle chrétienne’),² it is a fine distillation of Maximus’s theology that became a Christian classic, if its manuscript tradition in Greek and Slavonic is anything to go by.³ Because of the heavy concentration of and epitomising of Maximus’s favourite emphases, scholars such as Dalmais were led to believe that it was probably one of, or probably the last of, Maximus’s works. The current consensus, however, seems to be that the *LA* belongs to Maximus’s early works, written around 626 CE.⁴

Form and content

On the face of it, *LA* is a dialogue in the tradition of master and disciple⁵, although the note (κατὰ πεῦσιν καὶ ἀπόκρισιν) in the title is a comment on the nature of the work, which is a crossover between a dialogue and the late antique and Byzantine extremely popular format of questions and answers (*erotapokriseis*).⁶ Maximus the Confessor used this format heavily and can be credited with fully exploiting and developing its didactic potential, infusing it with insights of extraordinary speculative brilliance.⁷ The work was bundled with the *Four Centuries on Charity*, regarded as ‘the most attractive of Maximus’s ascetical writings’,⁸ and sent together to the same addressee, Father Elpidius (who is otherwise unknown). Both works are ‘de loin ceux qui ont été le plus lus et transcrits’.⁹ The piety, however, of Byzantine scribes in itself does not entirely account for their particular readiness to copy both works. As they were the only ones of Maximus’s works to have achieved anything like so extensive a circulation, there must have been something about them that had an appeal for readers above and beyond their doctrinal utility.

The ultimate goal of the master is to convert the interlocutor (ἐπιστροφή), by means of a ‘highly stylized didactic-paraeletic dialogue’,¹⁰ to virtuous emotions that will bring about salvation. That dialogue could be used to lead and convert people to a virtuous life is a tradition attested already as early as Plato.¹¹ Only, here, Maximus is employing dialogues in order to spell out emotional norms by

prescribing specific emotions, giving them a guiding, normative role in the life of the disciple. This is hinted at rather programmatically early on in the dialogue in the words of the disciple who, when called upon to imitate Christ, asks: 'Who can imitate the Lord? Though he became man, the Lord was God. But I am a man, a sinner, enslaved to a thousand passions. How then can I imitate the Lord?'¹² The admission of the disciple that bad emotions get in the way of good ones gives the opportunity to the master to seek to inculcate the appropriate emotions: love of God, fear of His judgement, arousal of compunction and call to repentance.

Emotions and Christianity: passions or emotions?

More often than not, emotions in Christian discourse have been discussed as passions, even as it has been noted that 'It is unfortunate that the English word for "passion", normally used to translate πάθος, is altogether insufficient to convey the variety of senses in the Greek term'.¹³ However, many of the senses of the Greek word πάθος in fact most closely approximate what we now think of as 'emotion'.¹⁴ Though not unproblematic in itself,¹⁵ the term emotion allows for a more positive and nuanced valuation of the multivalent Greek term πάθος rather than the English translation 'passion', which may be taken to connote only the most intense and damaging emotions.¹⁶ Christian authors had an ambivalent attitude towards emotions. While ἀπάθεια is praised as an ideal in Christian ascetic literature leading to extensive guidelines on how achieve it, this emphasis runs the risk of obscuring the degree to which passions as emotions were thought of as crucial and positive factors in the moral formation of the Christian. This has been qualified by recent discussions that point to many instances of an affirmative attitude to passions/emotions.¹⁷ Parallel to the hostile assessment of passions ran a positive valuation of emotions (πάθη) when harnessed towards the right cause. This ambivalence/ambiguity towards the role of emotions echoes ancient debates on whether emotions should be educated and moderated (μετριοπάθεια) or extirpated, leading to the ideal of ἀπάθεια.¹⁸ Both views became current in Christianity and informed Christian thinking on emotions.¹⁹ Their role in the moral formation of Christians is properly acknowledged by several authors. Gregory of Nyssa has Macrina assert:

Such qualities in us are called emotions (πάθη) and they have not been allotted to human life for an evil purpose. For if that were the case and such compulsions to sin had been included in our nature, the Creator would be the cause of evil. Such faculties of the soul exist because of the need to choose between good or evil. Think of how iron, forged through the judgment of the craftsman, is formed in keeping with his intention and becomes either a sword or a farming implement. Therefore, if reason, which is the special ingredient of our nature, is in control of the faculties imposed upon us externally, then as scripture has made clear through the symbol of man being ordered to rule over all irrational things, none of these faculties within us is activated towards the service of evil – fear engenders obedience, anger

courage, cowardice caution; the desiring faculty fosters in us the divine and pure pleasures.²⁰

Theodoret of Cyrrhus offered an equally important defence of the value of emotions as long they are moderated:

learn the truth of the divine teachings: the body's formation by God, the immortal nature of the soul, the reasonable part of which controls the passions, which also have a necessary and useful function to play in human nature. The concupiscible part, for instance, has a most important role, as has the irascible, its sparring partner. Thanks to the first we desire eternal things and look down on visible things; thus we imagine the intelligibles and, while still walking this earth, we long to see our Master in the heavens and aspire after virtue. And during our mortal life we have our share of food and drink, and besides these the human race is multiplied by the legitimate procreation.²¹

Maximus

While castigating the wrong emotions, on many occasions Maximus endorses the right use of the emotions.²² The first question from the *Questions to Thalassius* is a case in point:

The passions [. . .] become good in those who are earnest, once they have wisely severed them from corporeal objects, and used them to gain possession of heavenly things. It is possible, on the one hand, for them to make desire (ἐπιθυμία) the appetitive movement of the intellectual longing for divine objects, while, on the other, making pleasure (ἡδονή) the sheer gladness of the mind's operation when it is lured toward divine objects. Moreover, they make fear (φόβος) the cautious concern for imminent punishment for errors committed, while they make grief (λύπη) the corrective repentance for a present evil [. . .] They use the passions to destroy a present or seeming wickedness, and to apprehend virtue and knowledge.²³

For Maximus, as Paul Blowers remarks, 'Intellect and will are basic, but so too emotion and temper are integral to the realisation of virtue and the engagement of the whole human being in communion with God'.²⁴ One example from Maximus's *Four Centuries on Charity* is highly indicative of this:

He that has faith in the Lord fears punishment; he that fears punishment masters his passions; he that masters his passions endures hardships with patience; he that endures hardships with patience will have hope in God; hope in God separates the mind from very earthly attachment; the mind thus separated will have charity towards God.²⁵

Charity is the end result of going through a cycle of emotions, a progression of emotions starting from fear of punishment. The relevance of this for understanding what Maximus is invested in will become clearer later in this paper.

The disciple's question: 'Father why do I not feel compunction?'²⁶ leads to a long disquisition on the fear of God. The ultimate goal is that, by inculcating this emotion, he will bring about compunction in the disciple's soul. There is a progression in the way that his replies unfold. He begins by emphasising the fear of God: 'Because there is no fear of God before our eyes, because we have become the resting place of all evils, and for that reason, we scorn as a mere thought the dreadful punishment of God'.²⁷

The master picks his way deftly through a number of proof texts predominantly from the Old Testament, quoting from Deut 32:22, 32:41; Isaiah 33:14, 50:11; Jeremias 13:16, 5:21, 2:19, 15:17; Ezechiel 7:8; Daniel 7:9; 7:13–15, the Psalms 61:12, Ecclesiastes 12:13 and Paul 2 Cor 5:10. He draws on these texts to cultivate the fear of God. His reply is replete with the language of numinous fear, shudder and trembling. The emotion of fear is intensified by introducing his quotations with phrases such as 'who does not shudder (φρίκη?) at hearing Ezechiel saying',²⁸ 'who is not frightened, hearing David say',²⁹ 'who does not tremble at hearing things of the same sort from the Apostle'.³⁰

In these texts, the Old Testament motif of punishment and judgement is replayed. This motif was firmly embedded in Christian theology but became more prevalent in the seventh century, in part due to the turmoil caused among the Christian communities by the Persian invasion and the subsequent Muslim conquest.³¹ Maximus may be alluding to the Persian invasion when castigating the sins of his community: 'Therefore were we delivered into the hands of wicked enemies, I mean wild devils, and to a king unjust and most evil beyond the whole world (Deut 3:32) – that is their prince, because we sinned and did wickedly'.³² God was punishing humanity in numerous ways, but proper understanding of the causes for this and repentance would bring about their salvation.³³ In the Byzantine worldview,

Byzantine theocracy was based on the principle that the Christian empire was the earthly manifestation and anticipation of the kingdom of Christ, which superseded all other terrestrial realms; in other words it was the messianic kingdom announced by the Old Testament prophets and awaited by the Jews along with the true anointed God.³⁴

Maximus, like many of his contemporaries, read 'the Old Testament history of Israel into the contemporary experience of the embattled Christian empire'.³⁵ Given the political and military upheaval in the seventh century, 'the conviction was intensified that the chosen people needed to regain God's favour by stricter application of and obedience to the divine law'.³⁶

This conviction is echoed when the master proceeds to criticise the failure of humans to live up to ideals of Christian perfection and the failures that this causes

in their lives, which in turn brings about God's abandonment. Θεοεγκατάλειψη is a uniquely Biblical emotion further elaborated by Christian authors. By Maximus's time, it had a significant pedigree in monastic literature.³⁷ The feeling of being abandoned by God was widespread in Maximus's time. It comes up as question 18 in the very popular collection of questions and answers of Anastasius of Sinai, Maximus's older contemporary, but also across homilies and historiography. An anonymous enquirer asks: 'How many sorts of desolation (ἐγκατάλειψις) abandonment are there? Is it a trial, or as weakness, or for sins?'³⁸ Anastasius replies:

There are many different sorts of desolation. However all desolation comes about for two of God's purposes: either to provoke a conversion and self-control, as when He acts like a father with a son, or to signify rejection, when he acts like an emperor towards an enemy [. . .]. Thus the person in desolation should investigate interiorly the cause of the desolation, and reform that cause for which one has been handed over to filthy degrading passions [Rom. 1:26] or to evil temptations, according to the judgement of God. For very often because of pride, or for having passed judgement on others, or for hating some people, or for not blaming ourselves, we are handed over to sufferings of soul and body; others however through their indulgence and profligacy drag passions upon themselves, whereas yet others [do this] through their old habits, and consequent indifference and lack of fear of God, those who are constantly devoted to pleasure.³⁹

Infusing his teaching with sacral fear is not for fear's sake however. In fact, Maximus elaborates on this in *Centuries* 1, 81–82:

There is a twofold fear of God: the one takes its rise in us from threats of punishment; because of it self-control, patience, hope in God, and detachment – and from this comes charity – are engendered in us in due order. The other is joined with charity itself and constantly produces reverence in the soul, lest because of the bold freedom of charity it come to contempt for God. The first fear perfect charity casts out of the soul; for the soul possessing it is no longer afraid of punishment. The second fear it always has joined with it, as was said. With the first fear the following passages agree: 'By the fear of the Lord every one declineth from evil.' And: 'The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord is holy, enduring for ever and ever' [Prov 15:29, 1:7]; and: 'The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring for ever and ever'; and: 'There is no want to them that fear him' [Ps.18:10; 33:10].⁴⁰

Maximus is trading on the associations that can be formed between different emotions and on how these emotional states interact. He wants his interlocutor (and his readers) to understand this sequence of emotions fully, because he has meticulously analysed it to us. The importance of the sequence that Maximus lays out lies in the insight that the 'emotions are felt differently according the company

they keep'.⁴¹ Thus, the felt content of fear, in this instance, is determined by the dynamic interaction of more than one emotion which colours the emotion of fear in different ways, creating different effects and outcomes. In one instance, fear of God is prompted by a prospective emotion of harm (punishment) to come, whereas in the second, fear of God, bound up with charity, 'constantly produces reverence in the soul'.

This qualitative difference between a prospective fear of divine retribution which is felt by beginners in virtue, in contrast to a sacral fear that coinheres with love, affects the content of fear as an emotion. Elsewhere, in Q. 10 of his *Questions to Thalassius*, Maximus was challenged to square the emotion of fear with that of love à propos 1 John 4.18: 'If "he who fears is not perfected in love" how is it that "there is no deficiency in those who fear him" (Ps. 33:10)? If there is no deficiency, it appears that one would be perfect. How then, is he who fears not perfect?'⁴²

In his response, Maximus distinguishes between different meanings in which the word 'fear' is used in the Bible. He then deals with these different kinds of fear and examines how they interrelate. They are referring to different stages of development of the relationship to God. To demonstrate this, he highlights the difference between an impure and pure fear, and differentiates 'those who fear/fearers', the beginners in virtue who have not yet been released from the mere fear of divine retribution to a pure intellectual love of God and the 'those who love/lovers', whose perfect love of God includes an equally pure fear, an innate natural reverence, for the transcendence of God. John and the psalmist do not, therefore, contradict one another. The 'perfect' can indeed still 'fear', granted this qualitative difference between the two sorts of fear.⁴³

Fear is also prescribed as a way of pursuing the virtue of humility in Q. 91 of Anastasius's *erotapokriseis*. Responding to the question, 'What is true humility, and how can we, with [the help of God], achieve it?' Anastasius spells out a scenario of a situation in which fear arises and draws a parallel between this scenario and the fear of God:

Our fear of God should be at least as great as the fear we have for wild animals or for dogs. Very often when some persons have been on their way to steal something, they heard the barking of the dogs around the place and at once they retreated, not out of fear of God but of the dogs. Therefore our fear should be of Him. Let us become inwardly like those who have been condemned and are being kept in gaol, they are always anxious, in an agony of mind, lamenting and asking when the interrogator will come, and repay to each according to each one's needs [Rom. 2:6]. The person who lives with this sort of preoccupation is on the way to true humility.⁴⁴

Anastasius assumes that his correspondent(s) is familiar with the felt content of this emotion, the fear of wild animals, in these particular circumstances, and plays his point off against this experience, inviting them to rehearse this feeling as a means of persuasion. While Anastasius brings into play the fear of God in

the expectation that it will generate and reinforce the pursuit of a virtue, humility, in Maximus's case, what this pedagogical use of fear seeks to accomplish is love.

In the process of arousing fear and as part of this effort, the master breaks off his response midway and, through a barrage of questions, he castigates his audience for a litany of vices and failures:

Woe to us, for we have come upon the extreme of evil. [. . .] Are we not gluttonous? Are we not all lovers of pleasure (φιλήδονοι)? Are we not all mad for, and lovers of material things (φιλόϋλοι)? Are we not all savages (θυμώδεις)? Are not all nurturers of wrath (μηνιασταί)? Are we not all bearers of malice (μνησικάκοι)? Are not all traitors to every virtue? Are we not all revilers? Are we not all fond of scoffing? Are we not all hasty and rash? Do we not all hate our brothers (μισάδελφοι)? Are we not all puffed up (τετυφωμένοι)? Are we not all haughty (ἀλαζόνες)? Are we not all proud (ὑπερήφανοι)? Are we not all hypocrites? Are we not all deceitful? Are we not all jealous (φθονεοί)? Are not all unruly? Are not all listless (ἀκηδισταί)? Are not all fickle? Are we not all slothful (ράθυμοι)? Are we not all neglectful of the Savior's commandments? Are we not all full of evil? Instead of God's temple have we not become the temple of idols? Instead of dwellings of the Holy Spirit are we not dwellings of evil spirits? Is not our calling upon God the Father make-believe? Instead of sons of God are we not become sons of Hell? We, who now bear the great name of Christ, are we not become worse than the Jews? And let no one be vexed at hearing the truth.⁴⁵

The master assumes that his interlocutor (brother) is aware of these failings as he is meticulously listing them. Nearly all the vices listed (φιλήδονία, φιλοϋλία, θυμός), hatred of brethren (μισαδελφία), gluttony (γαστριμαργία), envy (φθόνος) and pride (ἀλαζονεία, ὑπερηφανία, τῦφος) are misdirected emotions which get in the way of the pursuit of virtue.⁴⁶

Sacral fear having been aroused, the master moves on to cultivate the emotion of compunction. A quintessentially Christian emotion with biblical roots,⁴⁷ compunction became the focus of profound theorisation in monastic literature. As well as involving remorse and regret, it was, at the same time, a call to perfection. It wove together remorse and regret with a call to perfection originating in God.⁴⁸

The master seems to have accomplished his goal in pedagogically arousing and structuring the appropriate emotions, for: 'After having heard all this and being deeply struck with compunction, the brother, in tears, said to the master: "From what I see, Father, there is no hope of salvation for me. *For my iniquities are gone over my head* [Ps 37:5]. Yet I entreat you tell me what ought I to do?"'⁴⁹ Lest the disciple lapses into despair, the master proceeds to develop a long piece of *paraenesis* meant to instil hope before he concludes the dialogue

with a prayer. The emphasis again on the use of emotions as catalysts for the soul to repent is unmistakable:

Let us rouse one another to emulation in charity and good works. Let us not envy one another; nor, grown envious, become savage. Rather let us show sympathy for one another and by humility heal one another. Let us not rail nor jeer at one another; *for we are members one of another* [Eph 4:25].⁵⁰ [...] Let us then love one another and be loved by God; let us be patient with one another and He will be patient with our sins. For we find the forgiveness of our trespasses in the forgiving of our brothers; and the mercy of God is hidden in mercifulness to our neighbours.⁵¹

Not only does Maximus insist on the power of love and compassion to bind the community together; he also posits this as a prerequisite for communion with God.

Social use of emotions

What comes across as a highly stylised didactic paraenetic dialogue is implicated in a wider process of the social ordering of emotions. For, as I have tried to suggest, emotions that have been consigned to the monastic/ascetic realm were also central to the moral and emotional vocabulary of late antique and early Byzantine society. Maximus, through the figure of the master, is thus conversing not just with a straw man in the figure of a 'brother' who is in need of spiritual direction, but also with those many unnamed/anonymous Christians who were exercised by the same problems. By singling out and identifying specific emotions and describing their pernicious effects on both the individual and the community, and by encouraging certain emotions as responses proper for Christians, like many authors before and after him, Maximus is involved in fleshing out emotional norms from the Biblical text. Thus, the function of a dialogue such as the *Liber Asceticus* was to reinforce and refine these norms by highlighting how emotions ought to unfold, and by showing how they help to structure behaviours.

Conclusions

Maximus's works are probably among the most dialogically articulated in Christian literature. By this I mean that his most important theological insights emerged out of sustained engagement with and reflection on enquiries from fellow monks and other enquirers on issues of practice or exegesis on restricted samples of biblical text. The *Liber Asceticus* is part of a larger project on the part of Maximus to use emotions to educate the soul and promote virtue. For those even vaguely familiar with Maximus's other works, the *Liber Asceticus* by design does not share the speculative brilliance that is very much in evidence in other works by Maximus, such as *Solutions and Doubts* or the *Ambigua*. This, however, seems

to be a deliberate choice. The work's centre of gravity rests on arousing the right kind of emotions while warning against the wrong kind, reorienting the intrinsic quality of emotions to remake social relationships in the drive for human perfectibility. Thus, the dialogue is didactically designed to goad the reader to spiritual growth and conformity to God's grace.

By the end of the dialogue, not only has the master moulded his interlocutor's judgements by moulding his emotions, not only has he reinforced them by appeal to the biblical authority, but he has moved his interlocutor (and the reader) through an examination of such emotions as fear of death and terror of judgement in the afterlife, to compunction, great hopefulness, love of neighbour and of God. Emotions such as fear and love of God provide a buffer against sins and vices. The ideal is so powerfully articulated that not to subscribe to this vision would require a resistance that would place the interlocutor/reader outside the community of feeling that the dialogue works to create.

Notes

- * The author gratefully acknowledges the support of the European Research Council, which funded the research for this contribution with a Starting Grant for the project 'Defining Belief and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean: The Role of Interreligious Debate and Disputation'.
- 1 Edition *Maximi confessoris liber asceticus*, ed. Peter Van Deun, CCSG 40 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000). For exceptions see Dalmais, 'La doctrine ascétique', 18–26 and Argarate, 'Car mes iniquités', 17–36.
- 2 Argarate, 'Car mes iniquités', 17.
- 3 On the manuscript tradition, see Van Deun, *Maximi confessoris liber asceticus*, 15–130.
- 4 Jankowiak and Booth, 'A New Date-List', 19–83 at 29 concur with the early dating of the work.
- 5 Filoramo, ed. *Maestro e discepolo*, and Föllinger, 'Charakteristika des "Lehrdialogs"', 23–36.
- 6 On this format, see contributions in Volgers and Zamagni, *Erotapokriseis*. On their didactic value, see Papadogiannakis, 'Instruction by Question and Answer', 91–105. On the relationship between question-and-answer collections and dialogue, see Oikonomopoulou, 'Ancient Question-and-Answer Literature', 37–64.
- 7 On his use of the format, see the case study by Blowers, *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy*. For a helpful recent overview of Maximus's literary output and use of literary formats, see Van Deun, 'Maximus the Confessor's Use of Literary Genres', 274–86.
- 8 Louth, 'Maximus Confessor', 138.
- 9 Van Deun, *Maximi confessoris liber asceticus*, 15.
- 10 Kattan, *Verleiblichung und Synergie*, xlviii: 'hochstilisierte didaktisch-paränetisches Gespräch'.
- 11 Schaublin, 'Konversionen in antiken Dialogen', 117–31.
- 12 *Liber Asceticus*, 52–5, trans. Sherwood, 104–5.
- 13 Ware, 'Meaning of "Pathos"', 315; Meredith, 'What Does Gregory of Nyssa Mean', 57–66; Stewart, 'Evagrius Ponticus', 73 refers to the 'acute problem of terminology in the many ways in which ancient writers used the term (*pathē, passio*) and modern ones use emotion'.
- 14 For this development, see the insightful analysis by Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*.
- 15 Dixon, 'History of a Keyword', 338–44.

- 16 On this terminological issue and its implications, see Fitzgerald, 'Passions and Moral Progress', 2–5; Konstan, *Emotions of the Ancient Greeks*, 3–40. Nussbaum, *Therapy of Desire*, 319 n. 4 uses the terms passions and emotions interchangeably. Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind*, employs the term 'emotion' for πάθη throughout.
- 17 Wilken, 'Loving God', 145–63; Blowers, 'Aligning and Reorienting the Passible Self', 347: 'For Maximus, numerous passions or emotions can become virtues through good use, and edify and enrich the outworking of love as the archetypal virtue'.
- 18 See Dillon, 'Metriopatheia and Apatheia'; Spanneut, 'Apatheia ancienne', 4641–717; Spanneut, 'L'apatheia chrétienne', 165–302; Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 87–9.
- 19 Sorabji, *Emotions and Peace of Mind*, 385–99; Knuuttila, *Emotions in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy*, 118–20.
- 20 Gregory of Nyssa, *De anima et resurrectione* = PG 46:61A–B, trans. Callahan, 222; Spanneut, 'L'apatheia chrétienne', 272–6. On Gregory's view on passions and emotions, see Smith, *Passion and Paradise*.
- 21 Theodoret of Cyrhus, *Curatio Graecarum Affectionum*, 5, 76–7, trans. Halton, 131–2.
- 22 On Maximus's views on emotions, see Wilken, 'Maximus the Confessor on Affections', 412–23; Wilken, 'Loving God with a Holy Passion', 145–63.
- 23 Maximus, *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, 1, § 47, 2–4, noted and translated by Blowers, *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy*, 89 n. 172. According to Blowers, Maximus relies here on Gregory of Nyssa's *De Virginitate*, 18.
- 24 'Gentiles of the Soul', 57–85 at 81; Blowers, 'Aligning and Reorienting the Passible Self', 333–50. On the role of passions in Maximus, see also Bathrellos, 'Passions, Ascesis and the Virtues', 287–306.
- 25 Maximus, *Cent.* 1, 3, trans. Sherwood, 137. On this work see, Argárate, 'Πρὸς τὸν θεῖον ἑρῶτα', 213–64.
- 26 *Liber Asceticus*, 467, trans. Sherwood, 118.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 467–71, trans. Sherwood, 27.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 501, trans. Sherwood, 119.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 523, trans. Sherwood, 119.
- 30 *Ibid.*, 531, trans. Sherwood, 120. On fear in the Old Testament, see Clines, 'Fear of the Lord', 57–92 and on trembling as a common image of fear in biblical literature, see Thomas, 'Fear and Trembling', 115–25.
- 31 Villagomez, 'Christian Salvation', 203–18. On the emotional impact of these events, see Papadogiannakis, 'Managing Anger, Fear and Hope' (forthcoming).
- 32 *Liber Asceticus*, 760–3, trans. Sherwood, 127. See similar comments by Jankowiak and Booth, 'A New Date-List', 28.
- 33 On this biblical motif, see Pouchelle, *Dieu éducateur*.
- 34 Magdalino and Nelson, 'Introduction', 1–38 at 28.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 19
- 36 *Ibid.*
- 37 Leroy, 'Egkataleipsis', 344–57; Driscoll, 'Evagrius and Paphnutius', 259–86.
- 38 Anastasius of Sinai, *Quaestiones et responsiones*, Q. 18, 28, trans. Munitiz, 87.
- 39 *Ibid.*, 28–9, trans. Munitiz, 88.
- 40 Maximus, *Cent.* 1, 81–2, trans. Sherwood, 148–9.
- 41 Rosenwein, *Generations of Feeling*, 8. As Daston and Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 305, argue, 'the felt substance of an emotion depends to significant degree on the company it keeps. An emotion classified next to, say, towering ambition and sexual jealousy differs in a significant sense from one bordering on envy and avarice, even though they may share a name and a host of other, more substantive features. What might be called the dynamic of an emotion changes with its neighbours – not beyond all recognition, but enough to create new possibilities of the objects and attitudes that give an emotion outlet and outline'.

- 42 *Quaestiones ad Thalassium*, § 83, 2–5.
- 43 Thus, Blowers, *Exegesis*, 59. This view of fear is reminiscent of Clement of Alexandria's distinction (*Strom*, 2.7) between an initial fear of God that is transformed to a reverential fear of God; see Knuuttila, *Emotions*, 116–18.
- 44 Anastasius of Sinai, *Quaestiones et responsiones*, Q. 91, 144–6; trans. Munitiz, 216–18.
- 45 *Liber Asceticus*, 596–615, trans. Sherwood, 122.
- 46 On emotions as virtues and vices, see Stewart, 'Evagrius Ponticus', 3–34.
- 47 Harl, 'Origines du mot et de la notion de "componction"', 3–21.
- 48 Hausherr, *Penthos*; Chrysavgis, *John Climacus*, 133–44.
- 49 *Liber Asceticus*, 852–5, trans. Sherwood, 130.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 930–34, trans. Sherwood, 132.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 968–74, trans. Sherwood, 133.

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8 Anselm of Havelberg's controversies with the Greeks

A moment in the scholastic culture of disputation

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The twelfth century has long been recognised as a critical period in the Western reception of classical Greek knowledge, and in the development of scholastic thought more generally. For many scholars, these developments go hand in hand, with the recovery of ancient texts (such as Aristotle's *New Logic*, for which see below) and a basic familiarisation with Greek helping to fuel the growth and formation of scholastic curricula.¹ Even when Latin authors knew little Greek, they still made overt allusions to the authority of the language, as is evident in the titles of Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon* (c. 1120), John of Salisbury's *Meta-logicon* (1159) and *Policraticus* (1159), or (more poetically) Bernard Silvestris's *Cosmographia* (c. 1147). Other scholars have focused on a complementary mode of intellectual development: the outward and accelerating pace of missionary activities directed toward those who lie beyond the bounds of accepted religious belief (Jews, Muslims, heretics, and, to a more limited extent, pagans). This context is most evident in the copious body of polemical writings, much of it in the literary form of a dialogue or disputation, which was produced during the twelfth century.² Central to both scholasticism and inter-religious polemic is the importance of debate – the basic but unassailable idea that arguing both sides of an issue could and would yield the desired resolution. In the hands of the century's most impassioned authors, this sharpened into the notion that through the manifest defeat of false positions (philosophical, theological or other) a more universal truth could be seen and grasped. The tone of a work and the degree of argumentation that was given could of course vary dramatically, but the desire for the reconciliation of divergent opinions through a method of oppositions was very widely cultivated, and it is elegantly expressed in two of the twelfth-century's most cherished phrases: *concordantia discordantia* and *diversi sed non adversi*.³ In some sense, this dialectical path from disharmony to harmony was the essence of the scholastic method, and as a form of presentation and analysis, it impacted the writings of almost every major theologian of the period, from those associated with major centres of learning to those associated either with or in opposition to the movement for clerical reform. This 'culture of disputation', as I have elsewhere characterised it, can be observed both as an internal intellectual development within Latin Christendom and as a means of engagement with the wider non-Christian world.⁴

The focus on Byzantine dialogue and debate in this volume affords the opportunity to consider another remarkable figure from mid twelfth-century Europe, Bishop Anselm of Havelberg (c. 1095–1158), and to consider his place at the intersection of scholastic argumentation, interfaith dialogue and religious reform. The debates that he held with Niketas of Nicomedia in Constantinople in 1136, subsequently written down in a work he called the *Antikeimenon* (or *Anticemenon*, c. 1150), have long been examined from the perspective of Latin-Orthodox ecumenical relations or, among Latinists, as a contribution to twelfth-century apocalypticism.⁵ They have also, and quite rightly, been seen in the context of Anselm's peripatetic career as a successful bishop-courtier of the twelfth century.⁶ I would like to suggest that the *Antikeimenon* may profitably be situated within the equally important and very well attested currents of contemporary scholastic and monastic debates. After all, Anselm's self-proclaimed book of 'controversies' with the Greeks has almost always been defined by the singularity of its experience; there simply are not many other examples of Western ecclesiastics holding debates in the capital of Byzantium and then recording them for posterity. On the other hand, there is an abundance of contemporary Latin dialogues and disputations, many of which, it seems to me, are too readily compartmentalised into topical categories that reflect modern, rather than mediaeval, concerns.⁷ This exploratory essay thus suggests a new context for reading the *Antikeimenon*. First, I shall briefly outline the broader context of dialogue and disputation in the twelfth-century Latin West. This context is crucial to understanding the reasons for Anselm's decision to include his disputation with Niketas of 1136 within a larger work on ecumenical dialogue. Second, I will focus on Anselm's *Antikeimenon* itself, and suggest some important parallels and possible connections to other debates current at the time, even though they are not directly related to the ecclesiological problems dividing Latin Christians from Byzantine Greeks. Third, and as an outgrowth to the second, I will argue that the debate with Niketas was, above and beyond his interests in Byzantine theology and ecumenism, part of a broader approach to articulating the public and performative dimension of truth, something that goes to the heart of the twelfth-century interfaith encounters and scholastic thought more generally. The objective of this approach is not to divorce Anselm from the context of Latin-Greek relations, but rather to see how literary dialogue and theological controversy served to embody the 'charismatic pedagogy' inherent in scholastic discourse, a perspective that may in turn provide a useful point of reference for Byzantine debates.⁸

Anselm of Havelberg was born into a world of debates, a great many of which were connected to the new tools of dialectic that promoted logical analysis or to the highly contentious matter of religious reform. The vocabulary of debate was most often expressed in terms inherited from antiquity: *dialogus*, *disputatio*, *altercatio* or *conflictus*. These words appear, often interchangeably, in the titles of an increasing number of works from the late eleventh century onward. Distinguishing 'literary' dialogues from 'real' dialogues is notoriously tricky business, and should perhaps not be too readily imposed, not least because there is an obvious grey area of overlap. Some may have originated as genuine discussions

or conversations about the nature of religion and the religious life, others were clearly literary set pieces allowing the author to give voice to the issues that needed to be examined.⁹ Perhaps one of the great attractions of the genre, extending as far back as Plato, was that it could be both real and fictive at the same time, a reflection on the past as well as a projection into the future. Mediaeval dialogues could also cover a range of subjects, including religious themes such as the lives of saints or more secular topics such as astrology and music. Monastic dialogues were usually between two individuals, to whom names might be given or who were simply called 'Master' and 'Pupil', or they could be between two qualities, such as reason and the soul or wine and water. Discussions of this type were not always controversies in the strict sense, and there are many references in the spiritual literature of the eleventh and twelfth centuries to amicable private conversations about religious matters.

Many of the pedagogic virtues of dialogue are observable in the writings of Anselm of Aosta (d. 1109), the eventual archbishop of Canterbury. He taught at the Benedictine monastery of Bec in Normandy using the Socratic form as the chief means for engaging his students.¹⁰ Others before him had done so too, but the expansion of the school under his early years of leadership as prior made the school an attraction to students coming from near and far, many of whom went on to occupy some of the most important positions in the Anglo-Norman world. This also explains why so many of his theological and philosophical works were cast in the form of a dialogue between himself and a student. Even those works not cast in the form of a dialogue, such as his highly influential *Meditations* and *Prayers*, betoken a commitment to the dialogical approach toward seeking and finding God. He tells us that his earliest dialogues (*De grammatico*, *De veritate*, *De casu diaboli*) were consciously grouped not according to the chronological order in which he composed them, but to their content and literary form, following the question-and-answer form (*interrogationem et responsionem*). He announces at the beginning of his celebrated work on the Incarnation, *Cur Deus homo* (c. 1098), that it has been written *sub dialogo* according to similar pedagogic aims, 'since those things which are investigated by the method of question and answer are clearer and acceptable to many minds, especially slower minds'.¹¹ The fluidity of boundaries between form and content are observable in Anselm's terminology, something that can be observed in much of the dialogue writing for this period in Latin West. Anselm will refer to the strictly monastic conversations he held with his confreres as *colloquia*, but will refer to the theological and philosophical arguments of his dialogues as a *disputationes*, and to its participants as fellow *disputantes*.

Dialogues could address a range of different topics, often simultaneously. This was certainly the case in dialogues that are more overtly polemical. So, for instance, Petrus Alfonsi's *Dialogus* (1110) is framed as a friendly and almost psychoanalytic conversation between his former Jewish self (Moses) and his present Christian identity (Peter), but it includes a wide-ranging discussion of science and astronomy, and sayings drawn from the Talmud and Islam.¹² The manuscript dissemination of Alfonsi's *Dialogus* was quite significant for the twelfth century,

as was Gilbert Crispin's rather even-handed *Disputatio Iudei et Christiani* (c. 1096) that purported to be a debate in London between himself and a Jewish business associate from Mainz. Both examples remind us that an air of authenticity resonated with a mediaeval audience no less than it does with a modern one (i.e. 'based on a true story'). Crispin was abbot of Westminster and a former student of Anselm, to whom he dedicated the work. In his *Disputatio cum Gentili*, he tells the story of a secret meeting of 'philosophers' in London to which he was led, and where he became involved in a debate with a 'gentile', which many have understood to mean a pagan.¹³ A more celebrated (though less widely circulated) example of interfaith dialogue blending philosophy and religious controversy is Peter Abelard's *Collationes*, which is cast as two dialogues in a dream vision (with Abelard as judge), the first between a Philosopher and a Jew and the second between that same Philosopher and a Christian. The overarching subject of the *Collationes* was that of identifying which tradition led to the highest good, although it touches on many other subjects as well. Some scholars have suggested that the dialogue was left incomplete because no final verdict is ever returned, but this of course was the bold hermeneutical challenge posed by Abelard in his *Sic et Non*, where statements from patristic authorities seemingly in contradiction with one another were juxtaposed without obvious resolution in order to stimulate the mind of the student.¹⁴ The semantic overlap between the genre of the dialogue and the practice of disputation is again apparent in Abelard's gloss on Boethius's *De topicis differentiis*, the most important source of logic before the arrival of Aristotle's New Logic: 'In the dialectical disputation (*in disputatione dialectica*), which proceeds by dialogue (*per dialogum*), and not continuously as in rhetoric, two interrogations are necessary'.¹⁵ What Abelard's statement so elegantly captures, although he is of course not alone, is that dialogue and disputation – the science of doubt as it has sometimes been called – played a fundamental part in the thought processes of the period.¹⁶ It is little wonder that it was applied to almost all areas of intellectual inquiry.

One of the most intriguing figures to straddle the world of literary dialogue and oral debate in the early twelfth century is Rupert of Deutz (d. 1129), abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St Heribert in Deutz, Germany.¹⁷ Rupert was a staunch defender of traditional monasticism and suspicious of the new fad for dialectical reasoning that led to the vanity of certain contemporary masters of the arts. Yet he also clearly appreciated the resources of its art and knew reasonably well the tracts of Boethius that had emboldened teachers of dialectic (like Abelard) to become speculative theologians. Quite striking is how eager Rupert was willing to face off in public debates with his adversaries, travelling to Liège, Laon and Châlons-sur-Marne for just that purpose. He proudly recounted his combative position several years later in his apologetically flavoured commentary on the Benedictine Rule (c. 1125). He went to France, he says, in order to engage in a mighty battle of disputation (*praelium disputationis*) with those famous masters whose authority was always held over and against him. Portraying himself as seated on a paltry ass, with only a servant boy to accompany him, Rupert combined the imagery of a lone protector of the faith with the vocabulary of feudal combat as he described

his expedition to join battle (*ad conflictum*) in distant cities where a large band of masters and students, not unlike a sizeable army (*quasi non parvus exercitus*), met him in order to hear his arguments and defeat them.¹⁸ The fact that Rupert employed such colourful imagery is perhaps indicative of the wider culture of disputation that was emerging in the first half of the twelfth century. Peter Abelard used much the same language in his own autobiographical apology, the *Historia calamitatum* (c.1132): 'I preferred the weapons of dialectic to all the other teachings of philosophy, and armed with these I chose the conflicts of disputation (*conflictus pretuli disputationem*) instead of the trophies of war'.¹⁹ Such comments about the conflictual nature of theological discussions become stock-in-trade to many writers by the middle decades of the twelfth century, which is worth noting because Anselm of Havelberg makes a point of avoiding such language in his discussions with Niketas.

Rupert composed two dialogues in addition to his memorials of disputation and his many exegetical commentaries, and they are both of relevance to Anselm. The first of these dialogues, known to most scholars as the *Altercatio monachi et clerici* (c.1120–1122), is a short debate between a monk and cleric over the right of monks to preach and teach publicly in the church.²⁰ Pithy, yet sharp and colloquial, it is both his best-known work and one of the most widely read of all the religious disputes that were written during this period.²¹ In a refutation of this work written during the 1150s, the abbot Philip of Harvengt (a member of the new Premonstratensian Order of clerics) alleged that the *Altercatio* was based on an actual debate between Rupert and a cleric, but that Rupert had manipulated its outcome when composing it so as to make himself the victor.²² This cleric whom Philip 'knew so well' was probably Norbert of Xanten, the founder of the order. A twelfth-century manuscript from Ottobeuron bears the title *Conflictus Ruoperti Coloniensis abbatis . . . cum Noperto clerico, si liceat monacho praedicare an non*.²³ Later manuscripts of the same work describe the work as a *Disputatio* or an *Altercatio*, but give alternate names for Rupert's adversary. The identity of Norbert remains uncertain, though probable. To what extent Rupert's work reflects this alleged encounter we may never know, but the choice of form for its final presentation is undoubtedly deliberate, and I shall return to this point below in discussion of Anselm. Rupert's second dialogue, the *Anulus sive Dialogus inter Christianum et Iudaeum* (c.1126), is a particularly interesting example of the thorny relation between debates both real and imagined.²⁴ Like so many of the other works of the Jewish-Christian controversy that take the literary form of a dialogue, the *Anulus* features a Christian disputing with a Jew over the correct interpretation of Scripture.²⁵ Christian accusations of Jewish carnality and Jewish accusations of Christian idolatry also enter the discussion. Unlike a number of other Jewish-Christian dialogues, however, the *Anulus* does not purport to be the recorded account of an actual exchange. Rupert opens the dialogue by stating that Rudolph of St Trond, a close friend of Rupert exiled in Cologne, commissioned the work from him. Rudolph, in his own writings, says that, while living in Cologne, he had frequently engaged in conversations and amicable discussions with local Jews, becoming so trusted by them that even their women were permitted to go

and converse with him. Rupert characterises the work as a *disputatio*, but in the prologue, he says that he has composed a work in the form of a dialogue so that it unfolds as a duel (*ut sub dialogo totum duellum procedat*) in the lone battles (*monomachia*) that Christians must wage against Jews.²⁶ Rupert further explains that such a work will be of use to the young soldier (*tirunculus*) who will need appropriate quotations from Scripture and all the other reasons (*omni rationes*) as he goes forth into battle (*conflictum*). The work therefore relates to future, not past, debates between Christians and Jews. This explicit combination of polemical intent and literary form are illustrations of why it is difficult to pronounce on the historicity of these sorts of encounters. Some purport to be touched-up versions of past debates, others promise verbal weaponry in future encounters. What the *Anulus* does call attention to is the purposefully didactic function of the genre, and this is a recurring feature of many twelfth-century dialogues and disputes, regardless of subject. With these considerations in mind, it is now possible to appreciate better Anselm of Havelberg's place in this wider culture of disputation.

Anselm's biography has been extensively treated in other places, and can be briefly summarised here.²⁷ He was a cleric and canon of the young Premonstratensian Order and a protégé of its charismatic founder, Norbert of Xanten (d. 1134). Norbert was a reformer, itinerant preacher, community founder and prince-bishop who self-consciously modelled himself on Augustine as the paradigm of religious vocation blending active (*activa*) and contemplative (*contemplativa*) visions of the Christian life. It was Norbert who gave Anselm his first documented ecclesiastical position by choosing him as bishop of Havelberg, Norbert who introduced him to the court of the German Emperor Lothar III and Norbert at whose side Anselm remained as the archbishop moved between service to his archdiocese, his ruler and his pope. In his lengthy career, Anselm went on to become an able administrator and a skilled diplomat in the service of emperors Conrad III and Frederick Barbarossa and an emissary for Pope Eugenius III during the ill-fated Second Crusade (a source, perhaps, of his apocalypticism). In 1152, he was appointed archbishop of Ravenna, where he died in 1158. Throughout his peripatetic career, Anselm was an ardent defender of the new reformed life against the harsh criticisms of men such as Rupert of Deutz, whom he may have known first-hand from his student days at the cathedral school in Liège.²⁸ In his *Epistola apologetica* (1138), he says that he knew Rupert, read some of his works 'out of curiosity', and found him to be a man of limited intelligence whose writings were of no particular consequence.²⁹ Since Norbert left no writings, the *Epistola* is considered one of the most reliable early descriptions of the Premonstratensian agenda. Written at the instigation of another canon who had reverted back to Benedictine monasticism, it was a vigorous and even aggressive defence of the belief that a canon held the high moral ground in the apostolic calling, the very subject that had prompted Rupert to pen his *Altercatio monachi et clerici* attacking the new canon-preachers. Anselm's confrontational strategy in this early work was to build up the prestige of the canons by tearing down the authority of the monks. Rupert is in fact the victim of one of the *Epistola*'s most comic slurs: 'I discovered that the proverb told among the Greeks fits him perfectly, "a fat belly need not

give birth to great understanding.”³⁰ The remainder of the letter presents a survey of important scriptural texts illuminating the respective roles and relative merits of action and contemplation in both Jewish and Christian pasts.

In turning to the *Antikeimenon*, one can say that it aligns rather nicely with the culture of dialogue and disputation I have described above. While scholars of ecumenical dialogue have long been intrigued by Anselm’s account of the 1136 disputations in Constantinople, the recorded exchanges with Niketas occupy only the second and third books of a three-part work which, as Jay Lees has persuasively shown, should be seen as constituting a single, purposeful work.³¹ Preceding the dialogue is a seemingly separate work, a history of the faithful, *De una forma credendi*, which addresses the concerns of his brethren about the proliferation of new religious orders. ‘Many people are amazed and sceptical at this’, Book 1 aggrievedly begins, ‘to the point of finding such variety scandalous and declaring it scandalous to others’.³² Who these people are he cautiously does not say, but this was a typical criticism of the Benedictines and it could certainly also be a reasonable objection from his Orthodox interlocutors, whose objections he turns to in Books 2 and 3. Writing in view of multiple audiences is exactly the sort of approach in which Anselm excels. The remainder of Book 1 is a historical defence of the variety of religious experiences, steeped in the fundamentally Augustinian notion of secular time as a mirror of providence, but emphasising doctrinal and institutional development as the hallmark of Christianity’s unfolding toward the apocalypse. The connection between Anselm’s two apologetic causes (defending the prerogatives of his new order and countering the claims of Orthodox Christians) is therefore an essential aspect of the work’s larger goals. It is this connection, and Anselm’s specific use of literary dialogue and the evocation of oral debate in achieving those goals, that I wish to explore a little further.

Book 1 is itself a treatise-format exposition of Anselm’s vision of history, yet it is no less replete with mentions of debate and argumentation. The unnamed critics of religious varieties are cunning inquisitors (*calumniosi inquisitores*) who raise questions (*inducunt quaestiones*) misdirecting the hearts of the simple (*corda simplicium pervertunt*). They disturb others with their many questions (*crebris quaestionibus*), insidiously slandering religious life not overtly but in secret (*non manifeste, sed latenter*). Anselm is very good at fighting fire with fire in order to silence his critics. ‘In truth all those issues pointed out by men who dispute (*disputant*) in this way about religious life, slandering it on account of its variety (*varietate*), might serve for their reform and improvement if they truly wished to be numbered among religious people’.³³ Anselm uses a number of different rhetorical devices to get his point across. In addition to using his critics’ words against them, he will himself often make a point by raising a question first (not unlike a scholastic *quaestio*), and then deliver his answer and supply the necessary scriptural proof in the passage that follows. One almost wonders why he did not frame the first book as a dialogue with those ‘inquisitorial’ sceptics, as other polemicists before him had. The carefully orchestrated debate with Niketas that follows shows that this was not necessary.

The two portions of the *Antikeimenon* (Book 1 and Books 2/3) are connected by virtue of having been included together in a dedication to the pope (and thereby offered to a wide audience under the umbrella of papal sanction), but one could also say that they are linked by a broader pedagogical approach that will lead readers from one level of understanding to the next, much as Abelard's *Collationes* proceed from a rudimentary conversation with the Jew (which focused on the historical past) to a higher, philosophical engagement with a Christian (which focused on the present and future goals of achieving the highest good). Central to both sections of the work is Anselm's propaedeutic concern to provide arguments of value for disputing with eventual critics as well as providing evidence of their merits and success. In some sense, we might say that the *Antikeimenon* looks forward in time by virtue of the fact that it looks backward in time. Here it must again be stressed that Anselm is targeting the critics of his new clerical order even more than he is attempting to dismantle the tenets of Byzantine Orthodoxy. This is not to say that his account of the debate in Constantinople is entirely a literary fiction, but rather that, like many dialogues, it fulfils several functions at once, giving voice to the arguments that need voicing while providing a dramatic rendering of the *vita activa*. Anselm freely acknowledges that the written representation of his debates with Niketas has been enriched by 'certain additions', most probably texts available to him after his time in Constantinople had concluded.³⁴ Upon closer inspection, one realises that many quotations from Western theological sources find their way into Anselm's speeches and that an entire passage from his earlier *Epistola* is actually placed in the mouth of Niketas, all telltale signs that this is a carefully constructed work and not a mere transcript of a public disputation.

The *dramatis personae* of the work is therefore of some importance. In the general prologue that precedes *De una forma credendi*, Anselm states that, during his time in Constantinople as legate, he used to dispute religious matters with the Greeks 'sometimes in private, sometimes in public' (this phrase has many echoes in twelfth-century disputational writing).³⁵ The formal disputation that resulted from his conversations was with 'the most learned and venerable Archbishop Niketas' because he was the first of a board of twelve Greek sages (*didascalos*) to whom all difficult theological questions were brought and resolved, 'without reconsideration'.³⁶ Niketas is lauded as teacher in his own right, directing studies of both the liberal arts (*artes liberales*) and Sacred Scripture (*Scriptura divina*), duties very familiar to any twelfth-century scholastic. This is, of course, all very relevant to Anselm's *mise-en-scène*, and in announcing the historical occasions that produced these works, he is both providing a manual for his brethren (in disputes with monastic and scholastic opponents of the new orders first and in confrontations with Byzantine Orthodoxy next) and also implying that his success over Niketas was no minor affair – a public victory that deserved to be shared and celebrated and a demonstrable example of his success as an itinerant preacher living the *vita activa*. Like Gilbert Crispin's praise for his Jewish opponent in the alleged London disputation, the bar is set high in order to emphasise the magnitude of the achievement. And like St Anselm in his theological dialogue with Boso on the necessity of the Incarnation (*Cur Deus homo*), this Anselm recognises that

his choice of genre (*sub dialogo*) is helpful to others more intellectually modest than he. Of its pedagogical value to novices, he is quite explicit: 'I hope that what I have written down may not be judged by those to be superfluous, since humble folk (*aliqui humiles*) lacking the wit to reach quick conclusions might gladly read it to find out more precisely what the Greeks say. So these simple people may discover how they too may respond'.³⁷ It might be noted that St Anselm had himself taken on the challenge of disputing (*disputans*) with the Greeks at the Council of Bari (1098) where, in his biographer's words, Anselm was persuaded by the pope to confute the Greeks in a 'rational and catholic disputation' (*rationabili atque catholica disputatione confutasset*).³⁸ The product of that encounter was *De processione spiritus sancti*, a treatise not in dialogue form but a work that was likely to have been available to Anselm of Havelberg either during his student days, or while in Rome, or during his later years at Magdeburg where he had access to a good library.³⁹ These parallels are equally worth underscoring, since there is good reason to suppose that Anselm of Havelberg saw himself in a long line of theologian-debaters, extending through his namesake all the way back to Paul and Jesus himself.⁴⁰ The Premonstratensians, after all, were followers of the Rule of St Augustine, not the Rule of St Benedict. It was to the charismatic bishop of Hippo, not the hermit-monk from Nursia, that they looked for inspiration and direction. Could there be a more relevant example in the history of Christian disputations against heretics – a contemplative theologian and author of spiritual and didactic dialogues – than Augustine?⁴¹ Just as Augustine faced off with the Manichaeans, so Anselm debated with the Byzantines. More adventurously, Book 1 might even be likened to a miniature *City of God*: a passionate retort to contemporary critics by means of a sweeping history of God's unfolding plan on earth. Both Augustine and Anselm of Havelberg articulated original and fundamentally historical conceptions of the apocalypse.

Scholastic writers were very fond of prologues, and it was not unusual to place prologues ahead of individual books in order to call attention to the plan and purpose of the work that followed. Inserted between Book 1 and the *Antikeimenon* proper is another prologue. Anselm calls it a proem (*proemium*). Though easily and often ignored, this second prologue returns to themes first alluded to in the opening prologue, stressing the formidable learning and acuity of his Greek interlocutor:

Since among the [Greeks], Archbishop [Niketas] was noble in his devout bearing, sharpest in his ability, most learned in the study of Greek letters, most eloquent in speech, and most cautious in giving and receiving answers, he neglected none of these things whether in a disputation (*disputatione*) or in a quiet deliberation which seemed capable of being turned to the advantage of his opinion and the destruction of ours; and this was especially the case since he was at the time the leader among the twelve elect *didascaloi*, who by custom preside over the schools of the Greeks. And he was elected by them to the task of going up against me in our disputation (*disputationis*).⁴²

In repeating Niketas's talents as a disputer and the high esteem that he commanded among his fellow Greeks, the prologue *prima facie* posits an unmistakably oppositional relationship between the two parties. (*Liber contrapositionum* is the Latin subtitle that was sometimes affixed to the *Antikeimenon*, which emphasises that very opposition while also evoking the very scholastic idea of pitting truths against falsehoods.) Yet the proem is more than simply a formulaic model of scholastic presentation. Its connective position following the historical treatise on religious life and before the debates with Niketas functions as an interpretative gateway for his intended audience. His readers are implicitly being led from defending their status among other Latin Christians to the arguably more serious (or at any rate more impressive) task of disputing against a Byzantine Christian and a skilled rhetorician. In the first work, Premonstratensian brothers were given justifying arguments in the form of a treatise based on scriptural passages and ancient antecedents; in the second, they are shown by example the successful procedures for engaging in a debate. This pattern would seem to offer a very clear instantiation of a pattern of learning by word and by example (*docere verbo et exemplo*) that Caroline Walker Bynum some years ago recognised was a significant 'aspect' of twelfth-century spirituality.⁴³ The treatises she focused on were the educational works of Philip of Harvenst (d. 1183), who was drawn from the schools of Laon and spent a long career as canon and abbot of the daughter house of Bonne Espérance in Brabant. Philip was an abbot while Anselm a bishop-courtier and diplomat, but there is every reason to imagine that the two men shared the same pedagogical goals. Both were direct disciples of Norbert of Xanten and they both shared the same enemy in Rupert of Deutz.

There is another work that may shine some light on the tensions and disputes among Benedictines and Premonstratensians. It was at almost the same time (c. 1150) that another canon of the order, an alleged Jewish convert named Herman, wrote an account of his own conversion from Judaism to Christianity. Whether the *Opusculum de conversione sua* is partially, entirely or not at all the authentic autobiography of the said 'Herman quondam Judaeus' is a question that has exercised the minds of many scholars of mediaeval Jewish-Christian relations; it is a common dilemma for apologetic works that purport to be based on lived experience or actual encounters. The reasons for considering this work alongside the *Antikeimenon* are several. Not only did they both originate within German Premonstratensian circles at almost exactly the same time, each recording events and conversations that happened approximately fifteen to twenty years earlier, but the *Opusculum* also speaks in apocalyptic terms of the 'coming age' of believers, evinces a subtle but determined vindication of the new white canons, straddles the fence of reality and literary representation by virtue of its literary form, and, most intriguingly of all, explicitly includes the report of a *disputatio* held between Herman and Rupert of Deutz in the city of Cologne (which modern interpreters have placed around 1129). A brief consideration of this fascinating work may help to throw into relief some of the dynamics of debate and apologetic at this crucial moment in the history of Anselm's new order.

Very unlike Anselm of Havelberg, almost nothing else is known about Herman, the one-time Jew (formerly named Judah) who converted, joined the early Norbertine movement and wrote down the dramatic story of his conversion in the form of an epistolary autobiography chronicling his path to Christianity.⁴⁴ Many attempts have been made to establish the identity of its putative author and the precise chronology of the events described. For the most part, these lines of inquiry have proved inconclusive.⁴⁵ The work opens with a brief letter of address to his son Henry. Responding to his pious urgings, Herman states that his intention is to present the whole sequence of events that led to his conversion, which contrasts to 'the ease with which we see many infidels, Jews and pagans convert to the Catholic faith through a sudden and unanticipated change'.⁴⁶ This sequence extends over the course of several years and many events, beginning with his enigmatic initial childhood dream and culminating with the eventual revelation of the meaning of that dream once he is a canon at the Premonstratensian house at Cappenberg in Westphalia. While the dream provides the framework for the narrative, dialogue and debate are central to the elaboration of Christian spirituality over Jewish literalness. Of particular importance here is the alleged debate that takes place between Herman (before his conversion) and Rupert of Deutz, a debate that turns largely on the question of images and the controversy over idols in Jewish and Christian understandings. In the second chapter of the *Opusculum*, Herman states that the intense conversations (*confabulationibus*) that he heard among clerics are what compelled him to inquire into the sacraments of the Church.⁴⁷ Listening in on these conversations led Herman to seek out Rupert of Deutz and challenge him to a public disputation. 'He was subtle in temperament, learned in eloquence, and most accomplished in sacred as well as humane letters. I saw him and invited him to do battle in disputation (*ad disputationis invito conflictum*)'.⁴⁸ Rupert's reputation for religious and secular learning echoes Anselm's description of Niketas, and the confrontational character of their encounter matches the descriptions given by Rupert and Abelard practically verbatim. Herman is not immediately converted by his disputation with Rupert. It is the pious prayers of two women who finally bring about his conversion. Nevertheless, disputation remains a theme of Herman's progression toward Christianity until he finally takes on the role of disputing against his former coreligionists, now as a representative of the clerical preaching order to which he belongs. What the *Opusculum* reveals, then, is a very carefully crafted work that employs a variety of devices in order to articulate a Christian and specifically Premonstratensian vision of conversion. As Jean-Claude Schmitt has argued, it is not the 'truth' or 'fiction' of the work that matters most, but rather the manner in which the work serves to legitimate a minor house (Cappenberg) of a fledgling order (Premonstratensian) by recourse to some of the most essential categories (conversion, dreams, autobiography) in twelfth-century culture. This contextual approach I believe can be profitably applied to Anselm of Havelberg.

I have so far argued that theological debates were quite widespread and that the dialogues and disputes that have come down to us often operated on levels far broader than their immediate and most obvious targets. Since a good deal of the

rhetoric of debate centres upon the drama of the encounter, it is worth concluding by considering how the public and indeed performative features of Anselm's debate with Niketas advance his desire for ecumenical unity.

At the beginning of Book 2, both the physical arrangements and the mood of the encounter are singled out for attention. The location for the first of the two debates is set near Hagia Irene in the Pisan quarter. The seats are arranged facing each other; court officials, judges, translators and notaries are present. A silence of anticipation (*silentio . . . et suspensis*) pervades the crowd of onlookers, whose seats are arranged according to their region of origin.⁴⁹ The dramatic setting is both detailed and compelling. That this was a particularly large crowd is suggested by the presence of attendants both sitting and standing (*assidentium et circumstantium*).⁵⁰ Anselm beseeches his audience to refrain from any applause until the end, as if it truly was a performance. And they do just that.⁵¹ Some Latins were present besides Anselm, of whom he names three as having a good knowledge of Greek: James of Venice, Burgundius of Pisa and Moses of Bergamo. It is of some curiosity that the contemporary Latin translator of Aristotle's *Topics* and *Sophistical Refutations*, James of Venice, was on hand to witness the debate, though as far as we can tell he was not present to perform his duties as translator. Was his appearance intended to suggest the authority of Aristotle? Or does his attendance simply draw attention to the erudite diversity of the crowd? This is not immediately clear, since among the three Italians it was Moses (undoubtedly Jewish) who was chosen to be interpreter, because he was the most illustrious (*clarissimus*) of either people in the teaching of both Greek and Latin letters.⁵² One is again reminded of the parallel with the contemporary Herman, whose learning in both Hebrew and Christian writings lends gravitas to the story of his pious conversion. Certainly it contrasts with the debate in Rupert's *Anulus*, for here the Jew is not the target of the *disputatio* but rather its chief mediator. At this point, still early in Book 2, Anselm states the humble purpose of his visit: 'I did not come in search of a quarrel (*ad contentiones non veni*) . . . I came to inquire about and understand the faith, yours and mine, most especially because it pleases you'.⁵³ Anselm bases his spirit of open dialogue on the admonitions of Paul (Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 11:16), and later on the humility of Christ, but Niketas, too, speaks equally in favour of an open and non-confrontational exchange. 'Truth will be arrived at much sooner', he says, 'than, if in our eagerness to conquer, we quarrel arrogantly' (*quam si superbe et ad vincendum avidi contendamus*).⁵⁴ Many modern commentators have found Anselm's 'overwhelmingly warm and affirmative tone' to be among the most salient and 'extraordinary' aspects of his whole debate.⁵⁵ There is no question that Anselm (the author) is going to great lengths to emphasise that his debate with Niketas was carried out respectfully and even amicably. The avoidance of 'contention' runs as a leitmotif throughout the debates, announced at their first debate in Hagia Irene (Book 2) and then again reaffirmed when the debate moves to Hagia Sophia (Book 3). While such ecumenism is both unusual and perhaps even praiseworthy, the search for truth by means of a dialectical encounter also recalls the context of the new attention to Aristotle's New Logic with which I began this essay. These texts were especially valued in the middle of the twelfth century in

large part because of their utility in explicating the mysteries of the faith, and it is this common search for truth that has brought the two disputants together.⁵⁶

In Book VIII of the *Topics* (159a), Aristotle had laid down some basic ground rules for the conduct of disputations, and this included recognising that the aim of those engaged in teaching and learning is quite different from the aim of those engaged in a competition. Aristotle gave detailed recommendations for the opposing disputants in precisely the sort of 'public assembly' that Anselm finds himself in Constantinople, all the more relevant since the stated purpose of both parties in the debate is to inquire and understand rather than to quarrel and insult.⁵⁷ Aristotle paid particular attention to the power and persuasion of words in framing questions and formulating responses. The interrogator, who has the task of inducing his adversary to contradict himself, should, for instance, conceal the necessary premises of the syllogism and use figures of similitude, induction and division. For the respondent, whose situation is determined by the opponent, advice is offered on how to resolve a false argument and prevent an unwanted conclusion. Some of the most basic recommendations concern the rhetorical ploys and inherent dangers in dialectical exchanges (*Topics*, VIII, 159a):

The business of the questioner is so to develop the argument as to make the answerer utter the most implausible of the necessary consequences of his thesis; while that of the answerer is to make it appear that it is not he who is responsible for the impossibility or paradox, but only his thesis; for one may, no doubt, distinguish between the mistakes of taking up a wrong thesis to start with, and that of not maintaining it properly, when once taken up.⁵⁸

As the debate between Anselm and Niketas unfolds, many of their exchanges can be seen to allude to the Aristotelian rules of debate as they were articulated in the *Topics* and the *Sophistical Refutations* (the very works translated by James of Venice). It would take a full study to test this hypothesis more thoroughly, but this subtle manipulation of Aristotelian argumentation is perhaps best evident in the lengthy discussion of the *Filioque* in Book 2, which was certainly the most divisive and unresolvable of all the issues separating Latins from Greeks.

The initial emphasis in this part of the debate is on how much common ground there is between the two positions. Very quickly, however, each debater strives to create logical traps in which to ensnare his opponent and force him to say something contrary to what he believes. First, Anselm tries to lead Niketas into a contradiction. He takes up the word 'principle' and shows that it can have a variety of meanings. If one speaks of the Trinity according to persons, then the Father is a principle unto Himself and the Son is a different principle engendered by the principle that is the Father. As Niketas suggests, this would therefore mean that there are two principles. If, however, principle is taken to mean substance, then the Son is of one principle with the Father. On this basis, the Spirit can proceed from Father and Son without the conclusion that Father and Son must be two principles. This, however, would seem to lead to a contradiction. Since Niketas has first denied the one thing (that the procession is from the Son) and

affirmed the other (that the procession is from the Father), yet wishes to maintain the unity of principle, Anselm can force the choice: 'now you must either dare to acknowledge neither or you must admit to both with me according to the Catholic faith as well as these rational positions (*propositas rationes*)'.⁵⁹ Niketas would appear trapped no matter which way he turns, and this is exactly what Aristotle had promised. Except that Niketas does not fall for the bait. He ducks the choice and responds with a trap of his own: 'By the same reasoning we might prove that the same Holy Spirit proceeds from himself as from the Father and the Son, since Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one divine essence'.⁶⁰ Unwilling to make that statement, Anselm ultimately falls back on a distinction between the members of the Trinity and the issue remains unresolved. A second series of exchanges over similar grounds again fails to produce agreement, and the debaters are forced to move to other matters. And so despite the promising start to Anselm's logical reasoning, no immediate victory is gained. Both sides in fact have pointed out the fallacy inherent in the other's reasoning. Here, perhaps, we may understand why James of Venice was sidelined from the discussion. Anselm shows his familiarity with Aristotelian logic, but not because he believes it can fully 'prove' anything. Indeed, as the knots of sophistry untangle, he denies logic's capacity in explicating the deeper meanings of the faith: 'We should both be foolish (*insaniamus*) to pry so into divine mysteries, wishing to find rational explanations for these things which we know to be ineffable'.⁶¹ The game of casuistry that Anselm and Niketas briefly engage in clearly shows the futility of the endeavour: logical traps only produce logical traps. 'Let us rather leave games of grammar and dialectic to children, instead delving into the meaning inherent in the words'.⁶² The traps do not work precisely because the debaters are not dealing with the *Filioque* but with each other.

Anselm recognises that reason alone cannot solve the theological division that separates Latins from Greeks. It is only their views of the issues, not the issues themselves, which can change at the end of the work. For this reason, Anselm is most interested in channelling the Aristotelian procedure of argumentation not towards the manifest defeat of the opposing arguments (thesis and antithesis), but toward that equally scholastic notion of finding harmony out of disharmony (synthesis). This is most obvious in the passages when Anselm not only defends the apparent paradoxes of the Latin customs, but is also able to successfully show the consonance and verity of those positions to the satisfaction of Niketas. 'After lengthy discussions – fraternal rather than contentious – the Spirit brought us humbly together, according to the rule of charity, in harmonious agreement (*concordiam composuit*)'.⁶³ And again, with more pedagogical force: 'In my view we must interpret divine Scripture so that it never contradicts itself, but rather is always harmonious (*nunquam inter se discordet, semper autem concordet*). This should be the strong inclination of the prudent reader – that he knows he has rightly understood the Scripture of divine law when he brings it into harmony with other Scriptures and with the law of charity'.⁶⁴ When Anselm and Niketas attempt to prove their points by Aristotelian logic, no resolution is reached. When Anselm emphasises harmony and unity (the very theme of Book 1), on the other

hand, Niketas professes his gratitude and persuasion at Anselm's sophisticated reasoning and agrees (rather improbably) that the best solution will be a future general council of Eastern and Western Christians under Western imperial leadership. Anselm's success in his debates with Niketas is shown not by the manifest defeat of his opponent's theological position, but by the concord that can and must unite all the Christian faithful in order to usher in the end of days.

Anselm of Havelberg's *Antikeimenon* at first glance appears both unusual and paradoxical. The paucity of other examples of Latin-Greek dialogues or disputations makes it difficult to know with whom to compare him, and the somewhat unresolved nature of the conclusion leaves open to speculation exactly what the debates in Constantinople finally achieved. A wider context, I have suggested, helps to bring the form and the function of the disputation into greater focus. As a reformer, a diplomat and a rhetorician, Anselm sits at the intersection of many themes current in twelfth-century religious and intellectual life. His role as an apologist for his order cannot be minimised, and the missionary nature of his engagement in interfaith debate should not be maximised. His appeal to unity within the West and his encounters with Niketas on the matters of doctrine that separate the East and the West evince the pedagogical and performative drama of a Christian exegete reflecting on his vocation at a moment of great uncertainty about the future of his order, a reflection ultimately about the future of all things. For Anselm, disputation and harmony emerge not as contradictory aims or desires, but rather as two sides of the same coin.

Notes

- 1 The importance of translation to the development of twelfth-century intellectual life extends at least as far back as Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, who entitled chap. 9 of his now classic work, 'The Translators from Greek and Arabic'. Many individual aspects of the translation movement have been studied, with as yet no definitive overview. See the recent discussion of the historiography in Mavroudi, 'Translations from Greek'. Still essential is D'Alverny, 'Translations and Translators'.
- 2 For a representative sample of this scholarship, see Iogna-Prat, *Order and Exclusion*; Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in Dispute*; and Moore, *Formation*.
- 3 For perspectives on both, see Jaquiere and Lucken's special 2014 issue of *Médiévales*, *Harmonie Disharmonie*; and Silvestre, 'Diuersi sed non aduersi'.
- 4 Novikoff, *Medieval Culture*.
- 5 Runciman, *Eastern Schism*, 114–116, considers Anselm within a chapter entitled 'Diplomacy and Debate'. For the place of Anselm's *Antikeimenon* in the history of apocalypticism, see McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 110, who calls Anselm 'unique among early twelfth-century authors'.
- 6 Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*; and Sigler, *Anselm von Havelberg*.
- 7 In this essay, I focus exclusively on the Latin culture. For the Greek context, but with many references to the Latin culture, see now Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, as well as *ibid.*, *Arguing It Out*. I am grateful to Professor Cameron for sharing her chapters with me ahead of their publication.
- 8 The concept of 'charismatic pedagogy' is taken from Jaeger, *Envy of Angels*.
- 9 See also the wide-ranging discussion by Von Moos, 'Le dialogue Latin'.
- 10 I resume arguments put forward in my 'Anselm, Dialogue, and the Rise of Scholastic Disputation', now chap. 2 in *Medieval Culture*. For a complementary discussion of

- pedagogical dialogue, focusing on authors other than Anselm, see Breitenstein, ‘“Ins Gespräch gebracht”’.
- 11 Anselm, *Cur Deus homo*, 48.
 - 12 For fresh discussions on this fascinating dialogue, see de Hartmann and Roelli, *Petrus Alfonsi*.
 - 13 Both works are edited in Abulafia and Evans, *Works of Gilbert Crispin*.
 - 14 Much has been written about Abelard’s hermeneutical strategies, especially as reflected in the *Sic et Non*. Discussion has largely focused on Abelard’s challenge to authority and his eventual condemnation by the church, first in 1121 at Soissons and again in 1140 at Sens. For a new perspective, see Novikoff, ‘Peter Abelard and Disputation’.
 - 15 Abelard, *Glossae super De topicis differentiis*, ed. Dal Pra, 150. Following Cicero and Boethius, Abelard holds that, properly speaking, the study of logic has to do with the discovery and evaluation of arguments.
 - 16 See the remarks of Constable, *Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, 130.
 - 17 For Rupert of Deutz, I rely on the authoritative intellectual biography by Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*.
 - 18 Rupert of Deutz, *Super quaedam capitula regulae divi benedicti abbatis*, PL 170:482–3. See the eloquent reconstruction of this episode in Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, 211–12.
 - 19 Peter Abelard, *Historia Calamitatum*, ed. Monfrin, 63–4.
 - 20 The work can be found in PL 170:537–42.
 - 21 Van Engen *Rupert of Deutz*, 310.
 - 22 Philip of Harvengt, *De institutione clericorum*, PL 203:807.
 - 23 See Van Engen, *Rupert of Deutz*, 311.
 - 24 A critical edition of the text edited by Rhabanus Haacke is printed in Arduini, *Ruperto di Deutz*.
 - 25 The title is an allusion to the conversion of the Jews: the ‘ring’ which the Father extended to his prodigal but now penitent son.
 - 26 Arduini, *Ruperto di Deutz*, 184.
 - 27 For biographical information on Anselm, see Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, part 1.
 - 28 There is some disagreement on whether Anselm studied with Rupert or not.
 - 29 The letter is printed in PL 188:1091–118. A full translation and a very helpful introduction is provided in Antry and Neel, *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality*, 38–62.
 - 30 PL 188:1120B; Antry and Neel, *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality*, 39.
 - 31 Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, part 2. This was likewise argued by Morrison, ‘Play’. The lack of a critical edition of the *Antikeimenon* remains a serious desideratum. The available edition (entitled *Dialogi* in PL 188:1138–252) is based on an eighteenth-century emendation of a seventeenth-century redaction: *Antikeimenon*, ed. Luc d’Achéry. The first full-length translation in any language, based on the faulty edition printed in the *Patrologia Latina* but supplemented in consultation to the single best surviving manuscript (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS theol. fol. 80) has been helpfully made by Criste and Neel, *Anticimenon*. I have generally followed their translation, only making small corrections or emendations as necessary. Their excellent introduction offers the most up-to-date bibliography on Anselm, which I make no attempt to reproduce. I have, however, chosen to give the modern standard transliteration of Greek names (*Antikeimenon* and *Niketas* rather than the Latinate spelling *Anticimenon* and *Nicetas* which appear in some manuscripts).
 - 32 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1141, trans. Criste and Neel, 47.
 - 33 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1143, trans. Criste and Neel, 49.
 - 34 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1142, trans. Criste and Neel, 45.
 - 35 *Ibid.*, trans. Criste and Neel, 44.
 - 36 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1141B, trans. Criste and Neel, 45. The term *didascalos* is clearly in reference to the Greek *didaskaloi* (traceable to 1Tim 2:7 and 2Tim 1:11, which the

- Vulgate translates as *doctor* or *magister*), but it is interesting to note that it was also employed in ancient Roman Jewish epigraphy. The French royal chronicler Rigord (d. 1210) seems to have known this because he describes the Jews who settled in and around France in the early twelfth century as having been led there by their own *didascali* who were learned in Mosaic Law. (See Rigord, *Histoire de Philippe Auguste*, 144: *sapientiores in lege Moysis, qui ab ipsis Judaeis didascali vocabantur.*) It would surely be unwise to make too much of this parallel in nomenclature, but the mental overlap between Greek and Jewish learned opponents in twelfth-century disputational discourse is, as we shall continue to observe, not to be underestimated either.
- 37 PL 188:1142; *Anticimenon*, trans. Cristie and Neel, 46.
 - 38 Eadmer, *Life*, 113, see also 73.
 - 39 For a comparison between the two Anselms, see Evans, 'Anselm of Canterbury and Anselm of Havelberg'.
 - 40 Anselm of Havelberg also praises the disputing abilities of Paul in his *Epistola apologetica*. Cf. PL 188: 1136; Antry and Neel, *Norbert and Early Norbertine Spirituality*, 59: '[Paul] is styled leader of the word of God and vessel of choice for carrying the word of God before the kings and leaders. He disputed (*disputans*) and persuaded about the kingdom of God, gathering many of the Jews, many more of the Greeks, and some of the Romans to the orthodox faith either by his preaching or his epistles'.
 - 41 In Book 2.24 (which deals with matter of the *Filioque*), Anselm cites Augustine's role in African councils and in combatting the Manichaean and Donatist heresies. In Anselm's effort to cite support from Greek authorities, Archbishop Athanasius of Alexandria is characterised as 'the fiercest disputant (*disputator accerimus*) against the Arian heresy'. See PL 188:1202.
 - 42 PL 188:1162; for a slightly different translation, see *Anticimenon*, trans. Cristie and Neel, 84.
 - 43 Bynum, *Docere*.
 - 44 The text is printed in PL 170:803–36.
 - 45 In an exacting study of the work and its autobiographical genre, Jean-Claude Schmitt has sidestepped the question of 'history' or 'fiction' and explored the hermeneutic structure and form of the letter-autobiography. Schmitt, *Conversion*.
 - 46 I quote here from my own translation of the *Opusculum* in Schmitt, *Conversion*, 202.
 - 47 Anselm also came to write *De una forma credendi* on account of the intensity of the debates raging among monks and clerics.
 - 48 Schmitt, *Conversion*, 206–7.
 - 49 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1163, trans. Cristie and Neel, 85–6.
 - 50 PL 188:1164.
 - 51 Anselm calls attention to the Greek custom of applauding as a negative comment on the course of discussion. No further mention of the audience is made until the end of each of each debate. At the conclusion of Book 3, they all call out in approval: *kalos dialogos! Holographi! Holographi!* [Good Dialogue! Write it all down!]
 - 52 PL 188: 1163.
 - 53 Ibid.
 - 54 Ibid.
 - 55 Cf. Cristie and Neel, *Anticimenon*, 34; McGinn, *Visions of the End*, 110.
 - 56 See Novikoff, *Medieval Culture*, chap. 4.
 - 57 Cf. *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1197, trans. Cristie and Neel, 137: 'Truly, what we have offered you here – a public assembly (*publicum conventum*) in the royal city – has heretofore never been granted to any earlier Latin, to any of those extolling himself in opposition to true knowledge of God'.
 - 58 Translation from Barnes, ed., *Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 1, 268.
 - 59 PL 188:1170. See also Lees, *Anselm of Havelberg*, 241.

- 60 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1195, trans. Criste and Neel, 134. In Book 3.11, Niketas makes a similar observation, stating that many skilled logicians of old fell short in their investigations, became arrogant with reason, and ended up as fools and heretics.
- 61 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1171, trans. Criste and Neel, 99.
- 62 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1195, trans. Criste and Neel, 134.
- 63 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1209, trans. Criste and Neel, 157.
- 64 *Anticimenon*, PL 188:1237, trans. Criste and Neel, 197.

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9 A Platonising dialogue from the twelfth century

The *logos* of Soterichos
Panteugenos

*Foteini Spingou**

And Soterichos Panteugenos makes into a story/keeps account of (λογογραφεῖ) the doctrine and presents/represents (παρίστησι) to those who wish which of the doctrines he believed by Platonising (πλατωνίζων) the discourse/dialogue (τῇ διαλέξει).¹

In the year 1156, a great rivalry between a certain deacon Basil and two prominent learned men, Michael, the nephew of the metropolitan of Thessalonike, and Nikephoros Basilakes, erupted in Constantinople and had a surprising result: the composition of a Platonising dialogue. The central point in the dispute was a phrase from the liturgy of John Chrysostom, ‘For you yourself are he that offers and is offered, that receives and is distributed, O Christ our God’.² The events related to the dogmatic dispute developed in two swiftly moving phases. At the beginning, the deacon Basil argued that Christ not only gave the sacrifice enacted in the Eucharist, but also received it as God. However, Michael *ho tou Thessalonikēs* and Basilakes accused him of Nestorianism (that is, of believing in two persons or hypostases) and they argued in contrast that Christ’s sacrifice was offered to the Father and the Spirit. This first phase concluded with the Synod of January 1156, where it was declared that the sacrifice was offered to all three Persons of the Trinity and is completed by the Trinity (as it was fulfilled on the Cross).³ Michael *ho tou Thessalonikēs* quickly recanted his position,⁴ while Basilakes retained as his main, brave supporter Soterichos Panteugenos, who was residing in Constantinople as the abbot of the Hodegon monastery and patriarch-elect of Antioch.⁵ Panteugenos wrote a dialogue in support of his views, the circulation of which initiated a second phase in the dispute.⁶ Panteugenos was called before the Synod. Nicholas, metropolitan of Methone, and a neo-Platonist, wrote his first speech as a response to Soterichos.⁷ Meanwhile, Basilakes recanted, leaving Soterichos exposed to the Synod. Soterichos sent his *apologia* – which is an ‘apology’ only by name – demanding to be allowed to defend his beliefs openly in front of the emperor or a mixed council of state and ecclesiastical officials in the Hodegon monastery.⁸ Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–1180), who by this point was officially named *epistemonarchēs*, ‘chief scientific expert in church affairs’,⁹ summoned a synod at the Palace in May of the same year. Soterichos engaged in discussions with the emperor and finally recanted. Despite his change, the Synod decided

that he should be deposed. It was then that he declared that ‘when Christ sacrificed himself willingly, He offered himself as a man and He received the sacrifice as God, together with the Father and the Holy Trinity’. This was announced to Soterichos in the so-called *Tomos synodikos*.¹⁰ A few days after the Synod, George Tornikes composed a tract (γνώμη) against the position of Soterichos and Basilakes dated to the eighteenth of May 1157.¹¹ Some months later, Nicholas of Methone wrote a speech addressed to the emperor, celebrating the victory of orthodoxy.

So far, the dialogue by Panteugenos has attracted attention in the main simply as a component in the dogmatic dispute.¹² I will discuss here the possible reasons that led Soterichos Panteugenos to expound his views in a manifesto written in the literary form of a Platonising dialogue. Before proceeding further though, it is important to examine the textual transmission and offer a critical approach to the modern printed editions in order to assess the text on which our discussion is based.

The text

The dialogue is staged at an unspecified time and place. Two friends accidentally run into each other, and the first interlocutor (‘Philon’) asks his friend (that is, Soterichos) about a Synod held in the palace against the ‘alien doctrines’ of two deacons. Philon, who had not managed to be present, asks Soterichos (who is not named in the text) to narrate the events (*Dialogue*, 229.21–230.30). Soterichos summarises the relevant events (230.31–42) and adds his own opinion – after the encouragement of Philon – which opposes the Synod’s decision (230.43–231.49). Philon asks for more explanation, beginning with the Synod’s proceedings (231.60–62). However, Soterichos again turns the discussion to his own arguments (231.63–68). In what follows, Soterichos tries to convince Philon that (a) what was proposed by the Synod could lead to Nestorianism, and (b) that the sacrifice of Christ was offered to the Father alone, and thus that if this is not accepted, one separates the two persons of Christ; and (c) the Eucharist is merely symbolic. This last point is developed in a form of an appendix to the dialogue. Shortly before the two friends separate at the end of the dialogue, Philon agrees with Soterichos’s views (236.177–237.210).

The text of the *Dialogue* is transmitted only as a part of the twenty-fourth chapter of the *Dogmatic Panoply* composed by the late twelfth-century historian Niketas Choniates. Such a thin manuscript tradition is surprising, as two of the four documents included in the same chapter of Choniates’s work have also been preserved in manuscripts independently and already from a very early date. Moreover, three more texts relevant to this dogmatic dispute are preserved not in the *Panoply* but independently – these are Panteugenos’s *Apologia*, the confession by Michael *ho tou Thessalonikēs* and the tract by George Tornikes. The *Panoply* itself is an anti-heretical work concerned to provide the reader with the Orthodox views composed after 1204 in line with the Komnenian tradition of *Dogmatic Arsenal*s.¹³ Choniates draws information on the earliest controversies from mostly

known sources, and the *Panoply*'s originality is to be found in mainly the last five books that cover the disputes from the reign of Manuel.

Despite the *Panoply*'s mediaeval popularity,¹⁴ modern scholars have to rely on two nineteenth-century editions, each of which is based on different manuscripts.¹⁵ Gottlieb Lucas Friedrich Tafl in 1832 was the first to publish the twenty-fourth chapter of the *Panoply* in which Panteugenos's dialogue is preserved.¹⁶ His edition was based on Parisinus graecus 1234 (thirteenth century). Eleven years later, Angelo Mai, in the tenth volume of his *Spicilegium Romanorum*, produced a new edition, using Vaticanus graecus 680 (thirteenth century). Jean Paul Migne reprinted Mai's edition in the 140th volume of the *Patrologia Graeca*. In 1886, Johannes Dräseke singled out the dialogue from the rest of the *Panoply* as an autonomous literary work. He proceeded to an edition of the text based on the comparison of the texts published by Mai and Tafel. Furthermore, Dräseke used the first speech of Nicholas of Methone, in which Nicholas quotes passages from the *Dialogue* word for word.¹⁷

Niketas Choniates signalled the dialogue as part of the dossier on the controversy, despite the fact that Soterichos represents, strictly speaking, heretical views and that the compilation of documents in the *Panoply* an anti-heretical compilation.¹⁸ Also, even if arguments deriving from some authors regarded as heretical are to be found in the *Panoply*,¹⁹ no other 'heretical' document is incorporated in any of the chapters reporting doctrinal disputes from the twelfth century. Even more surprisingly, the very placement of the *Dialogue* in the dossier emphasises its existence, as it should chronologically follow the Synod of 1156 instead of preceding it.²⁰ By prioritising the dialogue, Niketas also prioritises the arguments that refute the views of the Synod expressed in that document. Nonetheless, as discussed below, Choniates did not emend the text of the dialogue in order to paraphrase the expressed (heretical) views. Even more so, the dialogue is mingled with texts that could be used as Orthodox 'weapons' (that is, proofs) in dogmatic controversies. Thus, it was, perhaps, Niketas's sympathy towards Panteugenos's party that led him to quote the dialogue. Choniates's feelings towards Soterichos and his friends become apparent in his account of the dispute in his other major work *History*, as Alicia Simpson has recently shown.²¹ In the *History*, Niketas first presents both phases of the debate, and then adds a further detail: at the time of the debate, an unseasonable clap of thunder was heard, deafening the emperor and the council. A certain Elias, after consulting a book, interpreted the incident as predicting the 'fall of the wise' and indeed, according also to the *Panoply*, the 'most learned'²² men were deposed and expelled from the church with the Synod of 1157.

A Platonising dialogue

The Platonising form of the dialogue attracted the attention of readers of the work, from the very beginning. When Kinnamos writes about the text, he refers exactly to its remarkable length and 'extraordinary similarity to Plato'.²³ Choniates is also not late to emphasise its 'Platonising' form.

Kinnamos's comment on the dialogue's length must be associated to the impression that it left to the twelfth-century readers. In the Oxford manuscript of Choniates's *Panoply*, the eight pages of the printed edition occupy three densely written folia (or six pages).²⁴ Given that the *Dialogue* was circulated written on a scroll – a means used to send short texts such as prose or verse letters – the length of the three or four horizontally attached folios must have left quite an impression on the contemporary recipients.²⁵

Choniates's and Kinnamos's impression of a 'Platonising' dialogue responds to the effort of the author to include elements from Plato's work. To begin with, the frame is clearly Platonic: the accidental encounter of two friends followed by the narration of events from a recent past as the spark that ignites an argument would recall the works of Plato to readers. In the main text, connective phrases (linguistic indicators common in Plato²⁶) and the use of grammatical types long fallen out of use (such as optatives, metaphors from medicine,²⁷ modes of address [e.g. ὦ μάκαρ, ὦ οὔτος, ἦδ' ὅς and, most curiously for the twelfth century, ὦ φίλη μοι κεφαλή]) make the stylistic connection with the Platonic works indisputable. While the list of stylistic features in common with Platonic dialogues can be further expanded, any connection of the dialogue's argumentation to Platonic philosophy is highly disputable.²⁸ That said, Soterichos does try to use the Socratic method of argumentation. Yet, the articulation of his arguments do not always follow a rational sequence, and already in the twelfth century, Nicholas of Methone notes logical problems in the argumentation.²⁹

At any rate, the combination of Socratic method and Platonic literary style makes it apparent that, for Soterichos, the Platonic dialogue is a suitable form for argumentation. Indeed, Michael Italikos, writing at some point before 1137/38 to the wife of Alexios I, clearly states the 'dialectic [speech] articulates syllogisms on the basis of what is plausible'.³⁰ Choniates – the person responsible for the dialogue's survival – also perceives the text as a form of argumentation. He entitles it an ἐκθεσις (a demonstration) and refers to it as a διάλεξις which can be translated either as argumentation or debate. So, the sixty-year-old Soterichos might not expound philosophical arguments as sturdy as that of the elder Socrates, but he speaks like him.³¹ Thus, as Choniates also says, Soterichos λογογραφεῖ ('composes a work about' or 'keeps account of') the doctrine with this dialogue.

A century of *logos*

The production of the dialogue in the twelfth century, a time of flourishing education and learning, does not come as a surprise. Acquaintance with *logoi* – rhetorical texts and also rhetorical skills – allowed an individual from a non-noble origin to climb the social ladder and occupy a position in the church or state administration.³² Like many other holders of the higher church offices, Soterichos Panteugenos did not come from one of the powerful families of Komnenian society. As Paul Magdalino has already noted, Soterichos's very surname, Panteugenos (meaning 'all noble'), is ironic and points to someone who was surely anything but noble.³³ Thus, if the elderly Panteugenos could add merit to his arguments in

any way, this would have been a good choice for the construction and presentation of his arguments.

In Panteugenos's social context, knowledge of Hellenic literature (and especially of its relevant rhetorical devices) was seen as a social asset. His most fervent enemy, Nicholas of Methone, was himself a neo-Platonic philosopher, while the study of works from the Second Sophistic had become the object of lively study and disputation in the period. Therefore, developing arguments in the very form of a Platonic (or Platonising) dialogue would be likely to make an impression in itself (in addition, of course, to the very arguments). George Tornikes, writing shortly after Panteugenos's dialogue had been published, addresses Nikephoros Basilakes and Panteugenos's false wisdom,³⁴ but makes no criticism of the form of Panteugenos's arguments, only of their content. Similarly, Nicholas of Methone criticises the problematic construction of the argument rather than the literary form in which it was expressed.³⁵

If a prevalent rhetorical character is so crucial for the composition of a Platonising dialogue, then Panteugenos indeed composes a *logos*. In his *Apologia*, Soterichos refers to the dialogue as a *logos*,³⁶ and, most importantly, in the text of the *Dialogue*, he emphasises the very word *logos* when he sets out his purpose in the dialogue's introductory section. In the fourth line of the printed text, Philon says that despite his wish to hear the *logoi* of the two deacons (whose opinions on dogma differ from the traditional one), he was unable to attend the Synod (229.4–5). Thereafter, the same word is repeated every time the speaker changes and, each time, the same word acquires a different meaning.

The word first appears in the plural: the speeches of the two opposite sides in the Synod are *logoi* (229.4); subsequently, the word refers to the arguments that were voiced (229.8); a few lines further, *logos* (singular) refers to the current speech (230.30–31); and thereafter to God, the real Word/Logos (230.32). Hence, Panteugenos indicates that his speech (*logos*) is written as a response to other people's arguments (*logoi*), expressed rhetorically (*logoi*) and that the issue is related to God (the Logos). Although one would expect the climax formed by the different uses of the word *logos* to reach its peak with the meaning 'God', the author uses the term once again, towards the end of the introductory section, to signify his rhetorical skill (230, 35). Thus, the movement from plural to singular indicates that this *logos* (rhetorical composition), which has references to other *logoi* (rhetorical works), which contain further *logoi* (arguments) about the *Logos* (God), aims to demonstrate the author's *logos* (rhetorical skill).

Thereafter, the author soon demonstrates this skill, as he enters the main part of his argument. Philon invites the development of Soterichos's arguments with the following question:

[Is it] because you think that the words of the speaker are something dangerous?

ὥς δεινόν τι λέγεις εἶναι τὸ τοῦ εἰπόντος;³⁷

Even if this question sounds trivial in the English translation, the Greek text has a particular dynamic coming from the interplay of sounds /o/ and /i/, as well as

the repetition of the dental consonants /ð/, /n/, /t/, /d/. The absence of the sound /a/, and also of aspirated consonants (/ph/, /th/, /kh/), contribute further to the highly rhetorical and austere character of this first sentence of the main part of the speech. Soterichos's reply to this question is similarly alluring to the ear.

... he as God the Word had become human, he as the one who sacrifices offered [himself] with the conception, he as the sacrifice was offered through his fleshly existence, he as God accepted the offering and in every way He received the hypostasis according to the energies of his natures ...

... αὐτὸς³⁸ ὡς Θεὸς λόγος γενόμενος ἄνθρωπος
αὐτὸς ὡς θύτης κατὰ τὴν πρόσληψιν προσενήνοχε
αὐτὸς ὡς θύμα κατὰ τὴν σάρκα προσενήνεκται
αὐτὸς ὡς θεὸς προσήκατο τὸ τυθεῖν
καὶ πανταχῇ τὴν ὑπόστασιν κατὰ ἐνεργείας τῶν φύσεων παρελάμβανεν ...³⁹

When reading the text aloud, one cannot miss the repetition of αὐτὸς ὡς, with the following word always beginning with a theta. Moreover, this structure underlines the very argument of Soterichos: God (Θεός) is the sacrificer (θύτης) and the sacrificed (θύμα) whose sacrifice is accepted by God (Θεός), and so his sacrifice happened according to the energy of each person; or, to paraphrase, that different persons of God were sacrificed and received the sacrifice.

The available evidence on twelfth-century reading habits leaves no doubt that texts were read aloud. This well-circulated dialogue would not have been an exception,⁴⁰ and thus the dialogue's audience would be able to appreciate the sound of the text. Such rhetorical texts were expected to be read in literary gatherings of various forms, such as the famous twelfth-century *theatra*.⁴¹ These gatherings were Soterichos's targeted audience from the beginning. In the *Apologia*, Soterichos claims that he was encouraged by his friends to write this *logos*⁴² and he implicitly juxtaposes the style of his 'plain' *Apologia* and the admittedly platonising *Dialogue*.⁴³ His friends, the Basilakes brothers and Michael *ho tou Thessalonikēs*, and his opponents, George Tornikes and Nicholas of Methone, were among the most prominent members of this literary elite, and thus they were well able to appreciate the dialogue's style.⁴⁴

Among the aesthetic requirements for a well-made twelfth-century rhetorical work were performativity, theatricality and a fictional context.⁴⁵ The fictional stage is not explicitly described, but the Platonising features of the text transport the reader to an imaginary literary space, such as the Athens of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. In this case, it is not Athens but an imaginary Constantinople, where a Synod had taken place at the imaginary time that the work was composed. As in the *Phaedrus*, the listener could imagine the outskirts of Athens and the river Illissus flowing near the interlocutors as they accidentally met. When performed aloud, the questions and answers of the text's dialogic form would intensify its dramatic (and thus theatrical) features. These characteristics did not escape Choniates's attention, who,

in his introduction preceding the dialogue, notes that Panteugenos ‘stages’ (παρίστησι) his arguments.

Eustratios of Nicaea’s dialogue on the icons and Panteugenos’s *logos*

In the evidence presented thus far, it has been argued that the Platonising form for developing an argument would have been immediately approved as a choice of genre in the twelfth century; thus, it should come as a surprise that only one Platonising dialogue is known to have been composed before Panteugenos’s dialogue.⁴⁶ This contrasts with the popularity of another pseudo-antique type of dialogue, the Lucianic, which appears to have been immensely popular around the same period.⁴⁷ Instead, the only Platonising dialogue known from this period is the one composed by Eustratios of Nicaea at the very end of the eleventh century.⁴⁸

In the year 1093/94, a long dispute over the veneration of icons, which was sparked by the comments of Leo of Chalcedon, came to an end. Eustratios, a promising young cleric, later metropolitan of Nicaea, wrote a dialogue in a Platonising form on the dispute. His dialogue followed the decision of the synod that condemned Leo’s views and invited him to recant (which he did). With this dialogue, Eustratios expressed the orthodox doctrine of images in a manner pleasant to Constantinopolitan society – members of which had also taken part in the Synod itself.⁴⁹ An illustrious career then followed for Eustratios, which ended in an unexpected way, when he himself was deposed for his Aristotelianism.

Eustratios’s dialogue contains a number of similarities to that of Panteugenos. To begin with, both texts were written under similar circumstances, as they were both composed after an ecclesiastical synod was held. With their dialogues, both authors openly declared their views on the decisions of the synod in question. As in Panteugenos’s dialogue, Eustratios’s use of the Platonising form is particularly evident by the style of the dialogue. The Platonising features are restricted to modes of address and linguistic register. Even the names of the interlocutors in the two texts seem to have a correspondence. The discussants in Eustratios’s are named Φιλότης (‘Lover/Friend of Truth’ = Eustratios) and Φίλοσυνήτης (‘Lover/ Friend of Custom’). For Panteugenos, he himself discusses with Φίλων (‘Friend’).⁵⁰ An additional piece of evidence for a possible connection between the two texts is offered by the *Bagoas*, a curious work that Panteugenos’s friend Nikephoros Basilakes wrote after their condemnation.

Basilakes composed this work, an elaborate ‘prosecution speech’ for an imaginary court, or better yet a synod, while in exile.⁵¹ The genre of prosecution speeches was not popular in the twelfth century and the only comparable known example of a fictional prosecution speech has been located in the eleventh century.⁵² Although the title *Bagoas* probably refers to events from a dispute in the year 1147,⁵³ it also alludes to the dogmatic disputes regarding the veneration of icons. Bagoas, the protagonist, is denounced as an accomplice to a sacrilegious act, which involved, among other things, smearing icons with honey.⁵⁴ Insulting icons may be ‘frequently raised as a spectre in order to discredit an ideological

opponent',⁵⁵ but the last controversy about icons and their veneration was that sparked by Leo of Chalcedon in the context of which Eustratios wrote his dialogue. In other words, I suggest – without being able to prove – that Basilakes's subject mirrors Panteugenos's sources of inspiration for writing in the form of a Platonising dialogue. If I am right, Panteugenos expressed his arguments in the form of a Platonic dialogue because he was inspired by Eustratios's dialogue on the veneration of icons. Basilakes, who was close to Panteugenos, was aware of this connection. Because he wished to mirror the source of inspiration for Panteugenos's imaginary *Dialogue* (that is Eustratios's dialogue), Basilakes wrote his imaginary prosecution speech reflecting over the subject of Eustratios's dialogue.

But, if indeed this is the case, why would Panteugenos wish to remind one of a *logos* written by someone who had been condemned?

By the time of Panteugenos, it is uncertain that Eustratios was indeed a declared heretic. The Synod of 1156, which was the first that condemned Basilakes's – and so Panteugenos's – views, used an excerpt from a speech on the azymes attributed to Eustratios of Nicaea as supporting evidence for the Orthodox position against Basilakes, despite the fact that the memory of Eustratios's condemnation was still vivid. Panteugenos himself was around twenty years old at the time of Eustratios's condemnation in 1117, and so he would probably have been aware of the events. Thus, the Platonising form would work as a form of a hidden irony in relation to the Synod's decisions. Eustratios – whose words were used as 'proofs' by the Synod of 1156 – was no longer regarded as a heretic, but instead as one of the divinely inspired men of the church, whose words supported Orthodox dogma, as this is expressed by the ecclesiastical authorities of his time. Such delicate critique of the decisions of the Synod would serve the purpose of Soterichos's dialogue as expressed in its end: the encouragement of the Synod to rethink its recent decision against Basilakes and bring 'peace' to the Constantinopolitan church.

Choniates might also have been able to recognise this delicate comment (or better, this irony). In the *Panoply*, he remembered the events of the year 1117 as the most recent ones, and actually he narrates them just before the events of the 1157 controversy. However, Choniates does not mention the dogmatic quarrels of the year 1147, for example; thus, in the *Panoply*'s narrative, the condemnation of Eustratios immediately precedes the chronologically misplaced dialogue by Panteugenos. Furthermore, Niketas acknowledges Eustratios's rhetorical skill as 'more confident in dialectics than those [who] frequent the Stoa and the Academy'.⁵⁶ Thus, Niketas's sequence of events and comments connect Panteugenos with Eustratios, and so they point to Panteugenos's hidden irony on the decisions of the Synod.

A Platonising dialogue

Panteugenos's text is, in a sense, a record of a possible discussion between well-educated men trained in secular paideia and men trained in church affairs, which was subsequently written down and circulated. This would reflect a realistic

practice. If late antiquity was ‘genuinely . . . a world of disputation and debate’,⁵⁷ the interconnected and mobile world of twelfth-century Europe (broadly defined) also re-discovered similar trends.⁵⁸ Ambassadors and legates were discussing Orthodox doctrines both in Constantinople and elsewhere. Sometimes, such dialogues were recorded, read in the synods, and circulated. A remarkable testimony comes from the early 1170s. Theorianos, a Byzantine legate to the Armenian *katholikos* Nerses, claims that his recorded dialogue (διάλεξις) with the Armenian was read before the Synod and the Palace, and then reproduced and circulated in more than a hundred copies in Constantinople.⁵⁹ Similarly, the copies of Soterichos’s dialogue are known to have been circulated, as discussed above.⁶⁰

Hints of reality can be found in the text of Panteugenos’s *Dialogue*. For instance, it is obvious that Soterichos is the one who is speaking. Although he does not explicitly name himself, he does not hide his identity; instead, by staying anonymous, Soterichos gives evidence on his identity. The audience can identify the second interlocutor and Nicholas of Methone also states it clearly.⁶¹ Panteugenos’s name is not mentioned, because it is not necessary: his audience knows from whose pen the dialogue comes. This suggestion is also supported by the fact that Soterichos’s respondent, Philon, is named only once;⁶² and further, the change of interlocutors is not as clearly indicated in the manuscripts as in Mai’s and Dräseke’s editions, who note on the margins the names of the speakers.⁶³ Nor does Soterichos, as discussant in the dialogue, hesitate to step out of his fictional persona. He directly addresses the dialogue’s audience: ‘oh you’, he says, ‘to whom I address this speech’.⁶⁴ In this passage, Soterichos reveals himself and invites the beholder to engage in a real discussion and to identify himself with Philon. This invitation did not escape the notice of Nicholas, who in his speech (entitled ἀντίρρησις) takes up the *persona* of Philon. Not only does he object to Soterichos’s arguments, but also addresses his adversary in the mode of a Platonic dialogue (ὃ βέλτιστε, ὦ γενναῖε, ὦ οὗτος), as if the dialogue is really being held. Also, Nicholas replies to questions put in the dialogue as if he is the representative of the church Fathers – and thus a man well trained in church affairs.⁶⁵

The very word that is used in *Panoply* to describe the dialogue – ἑκθεσις – is used as title in a different work by Eustratios in which he claims to report the events and discussions during the visit of Peter Grossolano, the famous archbishop of Milan, in 1112.⁶⁶ In that case, as also in our dialogue, it was a contest of speeches that was recorded. Indeed, Nicholas of Methone names Soterichos’s *Dialogue* as such.⁶⁷

Finally, the very act of reading Soterichos’s text constitutes engaging in a dialogue; a dialogue in a general dialogue, or better a dialogue within a disputation.⁶⁸ Nicholas of Methone again says that, with the dialogue, Soterichos wishes to teach (διδάσκειν).⁶⁹ After all, two long speeches actually constituted a dialogue, and Niketas Stethatos named his long speech addressed to papal legates a διάλεξις or ἀντιδιάλογος, although there is no indication of change of speakers.⁷⁰ Thus, both Panteugenos’s and Stethatos’s διαλέξεις (discourses/dialogues) articulate arguments that contribute to an extended disputation.⁷¹

Concluding remarks: between orality and aurality

Choniates's note, quoted at the epigraph of this paper, conveys the essence of Panteugenos's work. Yet the hard-to-translate passage implies an internal dichotomy in the text: its very composition embraces both aurality and orality. Aurality (in Byzantium at least) presupposes a highly technical rhetorical development of the subject, which has little to do with the actual arguments and is more associated with the rhetorical skills of the author. Orality, on the other hand, requires a real or a seemingly real context, as it refers to words produced to be 'immediately' pronounced aloud. In other words, the work needs to have a grounding in actual events. Soterichos's text combines both. It is aural because of the text's eloquence and confrontation with contemporary aesthetic requirements, and thus the text demonstrates the author's social and cultural capital. It is oral because it refers to an actual dispute, and thus it represents the author's spiritual capital. This explosive mix could not fail to have reference to internal oppositions within Constantinopolitan intellectual society. Soterichos presents himself as Eustratios's heir, but Nicholas simply does not accept this. Instead, Nicholas demonstrates his own social capital with a highly rhetorical speech and tests Soterichos's spiritual capital with arguments. For Nicholas, Kinnamos, Choniates, Tornikes and even Soterichos himself, this remarkable Platonising discourse is nothing more than one argument in an ongoing dialogue about doctrinal and intellectual positions in a world that was constantly changing.

Notes

- * I am indebted to Averil Cameron for her most valuable comments and help. The research for this article was conducted mainly in the context of her project on Byzantine Prose Dialogues. Also I owe sincere thanks to Alexander Nehamas who commented on an earlier draft of this paper. Needless to say, any mistakes are those of the author.
- 1 Niketas Choniates, *Panoply*, 140: ὁ δὲ Σωτήριχος ὁ Παντεύγενος λογογραφεῖ τὸ δόγμα, καὶ παρίστησι τοῖς βουλομένοις ὅποια τῶν δοξῶν προσένευκε, Πλατωνίζων τῇ διαλέξει.
- 2 For bibliography, see Stanković, 'Generation Gap', 221–2; Angold, *Church and Society*, 82–3; Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I*, 279–81; Magoulias, 'Doctrinal Disputes', 204–8; Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 210–321.
- 3 Grumel and Darrouzès, *Regestes*, 1038.
- 4 See Ermilov, 'К вопросу об осуждении протэкдика Михаила на Константинопольских Соборах 1156–1157 годов', 70–1 and cf. Grumel and Darrouzès, *Regestes*, 1039.
- 5 On Soterichos Panteugenos, see Beck, *Kirche*, 623–4; Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I*, 279–81, 283–4; Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, 39–40. On the patriarch of Antioch in exile, see Pitsakis, 'Ἡ ἔκταση τῆς ἐξουσίας ἐνὸς ὑπερῳρίου πατριάρχῃ' and Spingou, 'John IX'.
- 6 Soterichos Panteugenos, *Dialogue*, ed. Dräseke.
- 7 On Nicholas of Methone, see Beck, *Kirche*, 624–5, where the previous bibliography can be found. See also Angelou, 'Nicholas of Methone', 143–8; Podskalsky, 'Nicholas von Methone', 509–23, with a re-appraisal in Siniossoglou, *Radical Platonism*, 85–6; Benakis, 'Neues zur Proklos-Tradition', 247–59.
- 8 See also Kurtz, 'Soterichos', 599–602.

- 9 See Stanković, 'Generation Gap', 222–35, where is also the relevant bibliography.
- 10 Grumel and Darrouzès, *Regestes*, 1041; see also 1042 and 1043.
- 11 George Tornikes, *Oration* 31.181–5.
- 12 For an approach from the point of view of theology, see, e.g. Grolmund, 'Die Entwicklung', 164–5. Political and literary historians treat the dialogue as part of the general debates concerning new intellectual developments in Constantinople, see, e.g. Browning, 'Enlightenment and Repression'; Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I*, 279–83 and 288; Stanković, 'Generation Gap', 220–2. Most recently, Aglae Pizzone ('Anonymity', 239–41) has been concerned with the question of authorship in the dialogue.
- 13 I.e. compilations with arguments against heresy (see Cameron, *Byzantine Matters*, 102–3; *ibid.*, *Arguing It Out*, 68–74). Choniates draws especially on the eleventh-century *Dogmatic Arsenal* by Euthymios Zigabenos and the twelfth-century *Sacred Arsenal* by Andronikos Kamateros. For a description of the contents of Choniates's *Panoply*, see Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 36–7; Cavallera, 'Trésor de la foi', 124–37. On his sources, see Simpson, *Niketas Choniates*, 36–50.
- 14 On the manuscripts of the *Panoply*, see van Dieten, *Zur Überlieferung* and 'Zur Überlieferung'.
- 15 Ermilov, 'Current problems', 91, has promised a new edition of the twenty-fourth book, which also includes the dialogue.
- 16 *Annae Comnenae supplementa historiae ecclesiasticae Graecorum saeculi XI et XII spectantia accedunt acta synodi Constantinopolitanae* (Tübingen, 1832), 9–17.
- 17 See the apparatus in Dräseke's edition, in which only minor textual differences can be observed.
- 18 The title of the dossier is Περί τοῦ δόγματος σὺ εἰ ὁ προσφέρων καὶ προσφερόμενος καὶ προσδεχόμενος, λαληθέντος ἐπὶ τοῦ βασιλέως κυροῦ Μανουὴλ Κομνηνοῦ. The first part of the title (namely, Σύνοδος Ἐκκλησίας Ἑλληνικῆς = 'Synod of the Greek Church'), as printed in Mai's edition, is probably the editor's interpolation (1).
- 19 Ermilov, 'Current Problems', 93.
- 20 Noted also by Ermilov, 'Current Problems', 97; Ermilov also suggests (98) that Choniates deliberately altered the end of Panteugenos's confession in the acts of the synod of 1157 by omitting the statement that the Sacrifice was and is offered to the Trinity (τριάδι). The dative (τριάδι) can be indeed found in the independent tradition. However, the omission of the verb's προσφέρω second supplement can only result in Greek gibberish. Furthermore, there is no indication elsewhere in the work that Choniates tried to alter the essence of the text he quotes. Indeed, the dative is missing from the text reported by Choniates, but this is probably the result of poor copying rather than of deliberate effort to alter the text. On the text of the *Tomos*, see Grumel and Darrouzès, *Regestes*, 499.
- 21 Simpson, *Choniates*, 42.
- 22 PG 140:137D: . . . οἱ γοῦν τότε λογίωτητι χαίροντες . . .
- 23 Kinamos, *History*, 177, trans. Brand, 136.
- 24 Bodleian Library, MS Roe 22, foll. 381r–383v.
- 25 *Apologia*, 329.5. On the circulation of scrolls, see Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 92–6.
- 26 E.g. σὺ δέ μοι τὸν λόγον διέξιθι, ed. Dräseke, 230.30. E.g. *Laws*, 805b, *Sophist*, 237b, *Gorgias*, 50b etc. Cf. ὡς εὖ γε, *Dialogue*, 229.22.
- 27 *Dialogue*, 229.24–5.
- 28 Soterichos only once makes a clear reference to Platonic thought, by mentioning the famous myth of the cave: *Republic*, 514a–520a. Cf. Nicholas of Methone, *Second Oration*, 13, who also comments on the superficial use of Platonic ideas by Soterichos.
- 29 Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, 325.26ff.; cf. Gouillard, 'Synodikon', 214–15, on modern critics of the method of argumentation.
- 30 Michael Italikos, *Letter*, 5, 96.7: ὁ μὲν διαλεκτικὸς [λόγος] ἐξ ἐνδόξων συλλογίζεται. Cf. Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutation*, 175a31–4.
- 31 Soterichos emphasises his Socratic *persona* further in the *Apologia*, where he implies that the members of the Synod were sophists (329.6–7, cf. 329.12).

- 32 On the term *logos*, see Papaioannou, *Psellos*, 18; Bernard, *Writing and Reading*, 49–50.
- 33 Magdalino, ‘Bagoas’, 61.
- 34 *Letter*, 28.176.7: ψευδοσοφία.
- 35 See *First Oration*, 350.26–7; 352.7–10; 359.14–15.
- 36 *Apologia*, 329.5.
- 37 *Dialogue*, 230, 43.
- 38 Omitted by Dräseke, but reported by Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, 327.18.
- 39 *Dialogue*, 230.44–231.49. The line division is mine.
- 40 Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, 322.6.
- 41 For the Komnenian *theatron*, see e.g. Marciniak, ‘Byzantine Theatron’, 277–85.
- 42 *Apologia*, 329. 12: . . . παρὰ δὲ τῶν φίλων κινηθεὶς εἰς τοῦτο.
- 43 *Apologia*, 329.10: . . . ἀκόμῳς ἀπολογίζεσθαι.
- 44 Choniates, *History*, 210.21, transl. Magoulías, 119, refers to those involved in the debate as the λόγοι of their time. Cf. Nicholas of Methone, *Second Oration*, 13, who says that the turbulence occurred in the αὐλή.
- 45 See Papaioannou, *Michael Psellos*, 246–7.
- 46 I leave aside the highly problematic *Dialogue on Demons* attributed to Psellos, although it probably dates from the twelfth century, as a text referring to the neo-Platonic tradition and with little impact before the fourteenth century; see (Pseudo-) Psellos *On the Demons*, ed. Gautier, ‘*De daemonibus*’, 132–77, trans. Collison, *Psellos’ Dialogue*, 51–82. The dialogue has been attributed with debatable arguments to Nicholas of Methone (Angold, *Church and Society*, 496, but see Gautier, ‘*De daemonibus*’, 128–9). The dialogues that follow the *De daemonibus* in one of the manuscripts (Riccardianus gr. 63, late thirteenth/early fourteenth century) and edited by Gautier, ‘*De daemonibus*’, 178–94, are most probably interpolations contemporary with the manuscript. The texts that follow the dialogue in Gautier’s edition are probably not thirteenth-century additions and deserve special attention. The argument that ‘composing ‘Platonic dialogues’ seems to be a common form of self-defense’ seems questionable under this light (Pizzzone, ‘Anonymity’, 240 n. 65, falsely attributed to Gouillard, ‘*Synodikon*’, 212 n. 240). One could argue it is a question of survival. However, there is no evidence that more Platonising dialogues were written in support of doctrinal arguments, and if more such dialogues existed, Choniates and Kinnamos would not have felt the need to emphasise the Platonising character of Panteugenos’s *Logos*.
- 47 On Lucianic dialogues, see Romano, *La satira bizantina*, and for a list of Lucianic dialogues, see B. Baldwin, ‘Recent Work (1930–1990) on Some Byzantine Imitations of Lucian’, incorporated in the article of Macleod, ‘Lucianic studies since 1930’, esp. 1400–4.
- 48 Demetrakopoulos, *Ἑκκλησιαστικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, 127–51; see Cameron, *Byzantine Matters*, 97–101; Barber, *Contesting*, 99–130; Beck, *Kirche*, 611 and 618; Glavinas, *Ἡ ἐπὶ Ἀλεξίου Κομνηνοῦ*, esp. 130, 132, 147–8, 195–8; see Angold, *Church and Society*, 46–8 for further bibliography.
- 49 On the function of Eustratios’s dialogue, see Cameron, *Byzantine Matters*, 99.
- 50 *Dialogue*, 232.88
- 51 Ed. Garzya, *Nicephori Basilacae*. See Magdalino, ‘Bagoas’; Macrides, ‘Law Outside the Lawbooks’, 141; Papaioannou, ‘On the Stage of Eros’, esp. 371–2.
- 52 Magdalino, ‘Bagoas’, 48–9.
- 53 Magdalino, ‘Bagoas’, 59; for a different view, see Angold, *Church and Society*, 80.
- 54 For an extended summary of the speech in English, see Magdalino, ‘Bagoas’, 51–5.
- 55 Magdalino, ‘Bagoas’, 56.
- 56 *PG* 140:136–7. Barber, *Contesting the Logic*, 101.
- 57 Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 33.
- 58 On the subject, see Cameron, *Arguing It Out*.

- 59 Theorianos offers this information in what he considers to be a record of the discussion he had the second time he met with Nerses (PG 133:231D–297B, esp. 248C). Theorianos refers to the dialogue published in PG 133:121B–212C.
- 60 See above ###.
- 61 Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, 323.4; cf. also the subscription of the metropolitan of Andrianoupolis in the *Tomos Synodikos*, 324.27–8.
- 62 *Dialogue*, 232.88–9.
- 63 Cf. the appearance of the verb φησί (234.118). The text as quoted by Nicholas of Methone does not suggest that the change of interlocutors was clearly signified (*First Oration*, 330.25–331.15).
- 64 *Dialogue*, 234.123; cf. 236.163.
- 65 See Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, 329.3–7 and 358.23–7 respectively.
- 66 Demetrakopoulos, *Ἐκκλησιαστικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη*, 84–99.
- 67 Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, 322.28–9.
- 68 In the *Tomos Synodikos* (325.5–7), it is mentioned that Soterichos made known his ‘slandorous doctrine’ by composing a *logos* in a written form (ἐγγράφως) and by engaging in oral discussions (ἀγράφως . . . διαλεγόμενος); cf. the discussion of the emperor with Panteugenos to which the *Tomos Synodikos* (322.4–12) refers.
- 69 Nicholas of Methone, *First Oration*, e.g. 351.4–5; 351.15; 352.7–9; 354.2 and elsewhere.
- 70 Michel, *Humbert und Kerullarios*, 320–42.
- 71 Cf. the point made by Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 56: ‘[Dialogue] was frequently used for theological subjects [. . .] even when one might have thought that a straightforward treatise would have been equally appropriate’.

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10 The six dialogues by Niketas 'of Maroneia'

A contextualising introduction

*Alessandra Bucossi**

The purpose of the dialogue¹ is to discuss and closely examine the procession of the Holy Spirit, and to resolve the quarrel on such a controversial issue that exists between us and the Latins, aiming to eradicate the separation between the two originating from this [disagreement]. The dialogical form, because it suits the subtle argument of enquiries that require a particularly accurate examination, is above all fitting for the close scrutiny of ecclesiastical dogmas, and is useful and necessary for the discovery of the truth for those who do not want to quarrel; wherefore also some of the greatest teachers used this form of discourse.²

With these words, the archbishop of Thessalonike, named as Niketas, opens the proem of his *Six Dialogues* on the procession of the Holy Spirit, composed at some point in the twelfth century. As the text by Niketas is not critically edited and his life is not clearly reconstructed, my essay remains purposely hesitant in its assertions. In other publications, I have expressed the view that the contents of the dialogues had convinced me – and also, for example, Martin Jugie in 1927³ – to date Niketas to the reign of Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143–80), or even more precisely to the pontificate of Pope Alexander III (1159–81), a period in which exchanges of embassies between Rome and Constantinople were extremely frequent.⁴ More recently, in the context of work on a critical edition of the dialogues, I would be more cautious; indeed, the very few and scattered pieces of evidence we have point to a different dating. Not much space will be dedicated to the reconstruction of Niketas's biography here because this is a work in progress; only some fundamental details will be sketched.

Two of the most important manuscripts of the *Dialogues*, the Vaticanus graecus 1115 (fourteenth century)⁵ and the Laurentianus pluteus 31.37 (also fourteenth century),⁶ attribute to the metropolitan of Thessalonike, Niketas *ho tou tou Marōneias* (ὁ τοῦ τοῦ Μαρωνείας, literally 'the one of the one of Maroneia'), former *chartophylax* of the Great Church, an 'examination' (ἐξέτασις)⁷ or 'dialogues' (διαλεκτικοὶ λόγοι)⁸ on the procession of the Holy Spirit. Two details deserve attention: first the form *hou tou Marōneias* (τοῦ τοῦ Μαρωνείας) and second the fact that this Niketas was *chartophylax* of the Great Church at some point in his life, and at another time metropolitan of Thessalonike. The

first detail is easily explained: *tou tou Marōneias* (τοῦ τοῦ Μαρωνείας) is not a scribal error of duplication (dittography) but a sort of ‘patronym’ that was quite commonly used to distinguish persons with the same first name; the formula indicates not the father’s geographical origin but the episcopal see where his uncle was bishop.⁹ It appears unquestionable, therefore, that the proper name of the author of the dialogues is Niketas of Thessalonike (*Nicetas Thessalonicensis*, in the Latin form used in manuscript catalogues) and not Niketas ‘of Maroneia’, a name that should be abandoned. The second detail we must consider is that before being metropolitan, Niketas was *chartophylax* of the Great Church, a dignity mentioned in the manuscript tradition and confirmed also by Pachymeres: ‘There comes [to my attention] also another book by Niketas “of the one of Maroneia,” whom the Great Church had amongst the honourables and as *chartophylax*, and later also the great city of Thessalonike was enriched by having him as an archbishop, a [book which] in all five dialogues unravels the holy Scriptures on the peace between the churches’.¹⁰ It is not easy to date either the period in which he was *chartophylax* or that during which he was metropolitan. As for the dignity of *chartophylax*, we can point to a seal that might belong to Niketas (‘I am the seal of Niketas, *chartophylax*’),¹¹ dated by Laurent between 1121 and 1133;¹² as for the date of his office of metropolitan, we have the episcopal list preserved by Vaticanus graecus 172,¹³ dated to 19 August 1439, that mentions two Niketai. According to Petit’s reconstruction, the first Niketas must be placed in the first half of the eleventh century (c. 1020, a date that, given the contents of the dialogues, is clearly too early),¹⁴ while the second Niketas, on the basis of the subscription of Parisinus graecus 243,¹⁵ which mentions a Niketas metropolitan of Thessalonike in the year of the world 6641, indiction XI, must be placed in 1133.¹⁶

In 1927, Jugie published a study of the identification of Niketas of Maroneia,¹⁷ author of the dialogues, and proposed placing him during the reign of Manuel I Komnenos (so between 1143 and 1180), because Neilos Kabasilas wrote that the author of the dialogues lived around 250 years before his time, and then specifies ‘under the fourth Komnenos’.¹⁸ Another interesting detail mentioned by Jugie is the passage that the Pisan theologian, Hugo Eteriano, advisor of Manuel I Komnenos, writes of Niketas in the third book of his *De Sancto et Immortali Deo: Iam veniendum est ad curiosas perscrutationes Nicetae praesulis Thessalonicensium, de processione sancti Spiritus*.¹⁹ The date of composition is certain, because we possess the covering letter sent to Pope Alexander III in 1177.²⁰ Therefore, the year 1177 is the *terminus ante quem* for the completion of Niketas’s dialogues. The most intriguing detail may be the words *iam veniendum*, which make us think that Hugo is talking about a living (or at least contemporaneous) author.²¹ If we turn to the list of bishops and check who was bishop of Thessalonike c. 1177, we find that the famous Eustathios became metropolitan of Thessalonike in 1178,²² and there are no metropolitans called Niketas in the episcopal list between the one mentioned by the Paris. gr. 243 (1133) and Eustathios (1178). We might hypothesise that the name of our Niketas was cancelled from the list because of a sort of *damnatio memoriae*,²³ as the list dates from 1439, a time when Niketas was

considered a well-known, and therefore suspect, *Latinophron*, but this hypothesis remains speculative.²⁴

Having surveyed some of the key details about the life of Niketas of Thessalonike we must conclude that there are only two hypotheses: either judging from the contents of the dialogues and trusting later authors, but not backed by contemporary evidence, we place Niketas during the reign of Manuel, most probably between 1169 (the year of the death of Basil of Ohrid) and 1178 (the year of the election of Eustathios), though in this case we need to hypothesise that his name disappeared from the episcopal list, or we consider trustworthy the only piece of evidence that we have, namely the subscription of Paris. gr. 243, and place his holding the office of metropolitan around 1133.

The *Six Dialogues* attributed to the metropolitan of Thessalonike have been studied by various scholars, but we do not yet have a complete critical edition. The first dialogue was partially published in *Patrologia Graeca*; the second, third and fourth were published by Festa between 1912 and 1915; while finally dialogues five and six were edited in a doctoral thesis in 1965.²⁵

The Six Dialogues

The opening of the proem quoted above offers us an important detail: Niketas uses the dialogue form both because he thinks it most suited to the complex theological intricacies of the procession of the Holy Spirit and because it is traditional. He says that the goal of the discussion is the resolution of misunderstandings with the Latins and the end of the schism, and that the dialogic format suits the need for precise analysis required by such subtle topics; it is especially fitting for the close examination of ecclesiastical dogmas and useful and (almost) demanded in order to find the truth for those who do not want to quarrel. For this reason, he says, some of the great teachers also used the genre.

Presenting the positions of the two speakers, Niketas states that their arguments are equivalent and equal in force because the procession of the Holy Spirit has never been examined and agreed upon in a synod, in which case both the parties have the same weight. Niketas goes on to describe the characters of the two opponents (Τὰ δὲ τοῦ διαλόγου πρόσωπα, ὁ Λατῖνος καὶ ὁ Γραϊκός²⁶): the Latin speaker who does not accept being dialectically defeated, and the Greek who, in contrast, manifests his own goodwill and is more moderate and open to accepting his opponent's position; in this, however, he imitates the athletes who pretend to be down on their knees in order to entangle their adversaries and overthrow them. Having described the two *dramatis personae*, Niketas presents the contents of the dialogues. At the beginning of the discussion, both speakers set out their positions (or better, 'principles'²⁷), then the Greek tries to demonstrate that the Latin arguments are absurd. The discussion about general principles occupies the first three dialogues and is based primarily on logical-syllogistic arguments, following the Photian pattern.²⁸ The fourth dialogue turns to metaphorical images, and both speakers use sequences of metaphors (substance-power-act, point-line-surface, finger-hand-body, sun-light-rays, fire-burning power-burning, Adam-Eve-Seth,

mind–idea–word, hidden hole–source–river, etc.) to explain the procession of the Spirit and the role of the Son. Niketas notices again that this is a typical tool in theological discussions (‘Then both move to the likeness of the examples, which is – this also – a habitual way of discussing for theologians’²⁹). In the fifth dialogue, the two characters admit that it is impossible to find a solution because of the extraordinary nature of the theological discussion; therefore, they resolve to find elucidation in the analysis of some patristic proof texts that they will investigate in the sixth dialogue. The two speakers finally reach an agreement: the Greek speaker accepts that the expressions ‘through the Son’ (διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ) and ‘from the Son’ (ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ) are equivalent and interchangeable, but asks the Latin to eliminate their addition in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

The conclusions and structure of these long texts deserve to be analysed further. To the best of my knowledge, these are the only twelfth-century writings on the discussions with the Latin church written by a Greek author that present a Greek theologian defeated by a Latin theologian, or if we want to be less dramatic, where Greek and Latin speakers reach an agreement; the only other case is the dialogue written by the Latin bishop Anselm of Havelberg. Is this account plausible (the question about historicity does not arise, because the author himself states this is not a ‘real’ dialogue)? What kind of texts did other twelfth-century authors compose? What is the place occupied by these dialogues in the panorama of anti-Latin treatises from Photios (Patriarch of Constantinople 858–67; 877–86) to the twelfth century? The defeat of the Greek theologian is very noteworthy and this is the main reason why a number of scholars – including myself – have dated the dialogues to the reign of Manuel, even though no other author dared to write such an outspokenly conciliatory text. Even Hugo Eteriano, who wrote by imperial order, is less irenic in his refutation of the Greek point of view; even Andronikos Kamateros, who wrote, again by imperial order, a dialogue very similar in structure and content to Niketas’s dialogues, does not dare to open himself so clearly to the Latins: indeed, he refuses to accord an identical meaning to the expressions ‘through’ (διὰ) and ‘from’ (ἐκ).³⁰ However, since according to our reconstruction, it is impossible to prove the fact that, as Kabasilas says, Niketas wrote under the fourth Komnenos (that is, Manuel I), we need to compare the *Six Dialogues* with other texts written before Manuel in the reigns of Alexios and John (1081–1143). This kind of comparison allows us to place the dialogues in context and offers suggestions and ideas that might help in understanding Niketas’s approach. Two aspects are taken into consideration in this survey: the author’s choice of the dialogue form and the main arguments that constitute the substance of these works on the procession of the Holy Spirit, i.e. the general principles, the syllogistic–Photian arguments, the use of metaphors and the exegesis of biblical and patristic proof texts.

Treatises on the procession of the Holy Spirit: an overview

Photios (Patriarch of Constantinople 858–67; 877–86) is universally recognised as the first Byzantine author who wrote on the procession of the Holy Spirit, and

a fundamental role is generally ascribed to his main treatise, *De Spiritus sancti mystagogia*.³¹ First, let us consider the form. Photios does not use a dialogical format; there are no interlocutors in his text and the only speaker is Photios himself, who addresses 'you, who asked some explanation', or 'you, the heretics'. He thus uses a form that will be adopted also by later authors, that is, a mixture between a treatise and a dialogue, or better, a treatise that contains some introductory sentences that are very near to a dialogue form, such as, 'if our opponent says so and so, we will reply'.³² What is more interesting for our comparison is the general structure. Photios starts with the discussion of the general principles and the implications of the double procession, and then discusses at length two passages from the Scriptures that will remain the essential basis of later discussions: John 16:14–15 and Galatians 4:6. The only other known author contemporary with Photios is Niketas Byzantios (second half of the ninth century). Niketas is much more concerned with the syllogistic approach, and uses this traditional logical tool in his *Capita syllogistica XXIV de processione sancti Spiritus*³³ to convince his opponents without dedicating much space to Biblical exegesis; he does not even refer to the authority of the Fathers against the *Filioque* as Photios does in the second half of his *Mystagogia*.

Moving forward in time, the author who is more significant for the debates on the *Filioque* in the context of the 1054 discussions (mainly devoted to the problem of the azymes) is certainly Niketas Stethatos (died c. 1090). Again, Stethatos uses a structure that is a mixture between a treatise and a dialogue, or perhaps is more similar to the *erotapokriseis* literature, in that he quotes the arguments of his opponents, usually a passage from the Scriptures, and then writes a long reply. His treatise is also the first to show a significant increase in the number of quotations from the New Testament, amongst which the most common are John 10:30,³⁴ John 20:22, John 15:26, John 16:14³⁵ and Galatians 4:6.³⁶ However, the real peak of the discussion on the *Filioque* is reached during the second half of the reign of Alexios I Komnenos (1081–1118), and in particular it seems to be the visit of Peter Grossolano to Constantinople in 1112 that was the trigger. Before briefly analysing the writings of those authors who were involved, whether certainly or probably, in the discussions with the Latin visitor, a couple of points must be highlighted. It is clear that the topic debated was in itself already a good reason to write in the dialogue form, as Niketas of Thessalonike says. However, the fact that public discussions took place that were open to the court, theologians and, in some occasions, also to the general public certainly cannot be ignored. We know, as for example Anselm of Havelberg confirms, that there were notaries who took minutes of the discussions;³⁷ therefore, it is more than plausible to think that the theologians who were asked by the emperor to reply to Peter Grossolano used, or at least read and were inspired by, the minutes of the debates.

A remark about the sources and authenticity of the dialogues should be added. In discussion of dialogues, one of the major concerns of scholars is usually to establish whether the written versions of the debates we can read are authentic, 'real', or not. The second step, after declaring that these texts are not historical documents, especially for the discussions between Latins and Greeks between

the ninth and the twelfth century, is to try to find Latin sources used by the Greek authors and Greek sources used by the Latin authors in order to demonstrate the existence of exchanges of theological literature in the twelfth century. While this may be possible for some Latin authors, it seems highly improbable that a precise contemporary Latin source for a Greek dialogue exists, or better, it is improbable that a *verbatim* correspondence with a Latin text can be found. Thus far, no one has demonstrated the existence of a single Greek theologian in the period who wrote on the procession of the Holy Spirit who read contemporary Latin theologians. What we may find instead, if we are lucky and very careful in our analysis, is a flavour of Latin ideas, rather than a quotation from Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Damian or another Latin author. Further, even when there are cases in which a Latin speaker quotes a Greek Church Father, we cannot be sure that he actually read and knew the work in question; for example, when we try to find Greek sources for Anselm of Havelberg, we must take into account the possibility that when writing the dialogue, inspired by the minutes, Anselm attributed to the Latin character an argument of the Greek speaker that was in fact a quotation, perhaps not openly attributed, from a Greek Father; thus, Anselm may have quoted a Greek patristic text but without knowing it.

I think it is a kind of academic obduracy that gives rise to the relentless hunt for a patristic source for every single passage on the *Filioque*. The same kind of obstinacy often forces scholars to find details that might help to refer a dialogue to a precise event and date, without accepting that references to the historical circumstances should be interpreted in a broader way, such as by appealing to Magdalino's description of such dialogues as 'rhetorical journalism'.³⁸ According to this, the dialogues can be described as embellished press reports, sometimes even assembled at the order of emperors and popes. Consequently, in this kind of writing, there is a starting point (that is, the discussion that really took place) and then there is an ornament, an embellishment (that is, the editorial intervention that bends the facts so as to create a pleasant account). Nonetheless, I believe, the topics discussed, and the arguments and lines of reasoning, can be considered real, and these are what matter for interest in our analysis, not the outcomes of the discussions. In this context, the writings inspired by the visit of Peter Grossolano are particularly interesting, because as with Anselm of Havelberg, we are talking about dialogues that certainly took place, so we can be sure that these treatises preserve at least some traces of the themes that were debated.

One of the authors who was certainly present during the discussions that took place in 1112 with Peter Grossolano is John Phournes (*fl. c.* 1100). The very title of his text already gives a good picture of the circumstances: the discussion took place in the presence of the emperor, the senate and the synod ('A refuting answer against the things said by the archbishop of Milan Peter, on the procession of the all-holy Spirit, in the presence of the emperor kyrios Alexios Komnenos and the entire synod and senate by the monk kyrios John Phournes, and protos of mount Ganos, spiritual <father>').³⁹ Most probably not only the setting of the event but also this very account were formal: as Grumel supposes, Phournes's

text may be the official answer requested by the emperor summarising the replies of the seven theologians who debated with the archbishop of Milan.⁴⁰

Phournes's treatise has some features that link it to a dialogue, as it is directed to the archbishop, who is addressed directly in second person singular ('You, saying these things, oh archbishop . . .'),⁴¹ and it reports and refutes his opinions in direct speech ('you say', 'you propose', 'you reply', in Greek λέγεις, προτείνεις, ἀνθυποφέρεις, etc.). It must be emphasised that when we analyse the texts written in relation to the exchanges of 1112, we can check their accuracy against two documents that preserve Grossolano's version of the debates, one in Greek and one in Latin. There are various examples of the close correspondence between Phournes and Grossolano: Phournes's passage on how to preserve the equality of 'glory' (δόξα) between Father and Son⁴² treats a topic also treated by Grossolano, which can be found in Greek in the *Patrologia Graeca*⁴³ and in Latin in the account partially transcribed in *Bibliotheca Casinensis*;⁴⁴ equally, Phournes's discussion of the passage of John 16.15: 'All that belongs to the Father is mine',⁴⁵ followed by the passage in which Grossolano accuses the Greek theologians of having added 'only from the Father' (μόνου) to the Creed, has a correspondence in Grossolano's Greek text;⁴⁶ and so on. However, a passage that is more interesting for our analysis is the section which adumbrates the discussions on the terms that describe the procession. Indeed, reading through these twelfth-century texts dedicated to the *Filioque*, it becomes clear that their authors show a particular attention to the definition and interpretation of the theological technical vocabulary: a feature that becomes more and more accurate and precise over time. In Phournes when the Latin spokesman talks about two 'glories' (δόξας) of each person of the Trinity – the Father because of generation and procession, the Son because He is generated and plays a part in the procession of the Spirit and finally the Spirit because He proceeds from the Father and the Son⁴⁷ – the Greek opponent replies with a very accurate refutation based on the translation and interpretation of the word 'glory' (δόξα) and on the definition of personal qualities: he says that his opponent refers to two 'glories' of each person confusing the concepts of 'glory' with that of distinctive properties of the hypostases ('What you call glories are distinctive properties of the hypostases').⁴⁸ Finally, we must also note the use of the metaphor of hands that explains why Son and Spirit cannot come from each other,⁴⁹ a use of metaphor that connects Phournes with Niketas Seides (Σείδης, first half of the twelfth century), another of the theologians who discussed with Grossolano.

Seides composed a long work divided into four parts and used a form that is a hybrid between *erotapokriseis* and dialogue. The part of the text that deals with the procession of the Holy Spirit starts with the passages that are usually ascribed to the arsenal of Latin arguments. Each of these Gospel citations is refuted by the Greek speaker using the explanation of the difference between common and personal characteristics and emphasising the serious consequences of confusing the two.⁵⁰ The discussion of John 15.26 ('When the Paraclete comes, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father – he will testify about me')⁵¹ leads to a passage that exemplifies the deep interest shown in this period in the precise definition of theological vocabulary

already mentioned; in this case, Seides states clearly that the verb ‘to proceed’ (ἐκπορεύεσθαι) does not signify ‘to be sent’ but is the technical verb that means ‘to have existence from the Father’.⁵² Seides also shows that the equality of glory between Father and Son, the topic we have found in Phournes and Grossolano, was indeed a matter for discussion when he explains that procession from the Son is not a guarantee of ‘equality of honour’ (ἰσοτιμία) with the Father.⁵³ But the part that is more noteworthy for us is the reliance on metaphors. Some are well known for their patristic origin and are widely used (sun–light–rays⁵⁴), others are not so common; however, interestingly enough, of these some are employed by Niketas of Thessalonike, namely the metaphor of one source and two streams (note that also the Latin author Grossolano used the very near metaphor of two sources⁵⁵), as well as the metaphors of root–branch–fruit, fire–light–warmth,⁵⁶ source–river–sea and the interesting burning bush–fire–word, Adam–Eva–Seth, soul–mind–reason.

The third author to be briefly analysed is Eustratios of Nicaea, who is indeed the most significant in relation to Niketas, since Alexei Barmine proved that there is a close relationship between the latter’s dialogues and the philosopher’s writings.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, it is necessary to be very careful with Eustratios because there is much more written by him than what is printed in Demetrakopoulos’s *Bibliotheca Ecclesiastica*; on this basis, it is clear that whatever we say on his production on the *Filioque* can only be a very partial account.⁵⁸ According to Grumel, there are at least three treatises that are still unpublished.⁵⁹ However, even considering only what is available in a printed version, we can see more traces of the encounters with Grossolano. In the first two orations published by Demetrakopoulos, Eustratios does not address the opponent, but talks about ‘them’; while in the third – ‘By the same an exposition of the dialogue that took place in the presence of the emperor sir Alexios Komnenos with Grossolano, archbishop of Milan . . .’⁶⁰ – he adopted a form that reports brief Latin questions followed by articulated Greek answers. Eustratios himself helps us to define this literary form: as he states in his title, his text is an ‘exposition of the dialogue that took place’, so it is a kind of narration of the events that took place and of the discussions that occurred. He also gives us an idea of how the discussions developed: they lasted for some days, during which the emperor himself intervened. The contents are parallel to the others we have analysed: discussion about personal and common characteristics and discussion of Scriptural quotations.⁶¹ However, Eustratios seems to give more space to the Latin line of reasoning, presenting their logical flow in a more extended way compared to the other theologians. He finishes with a more syllogistic section, a feature that was very fashionable in this period,⁶² as confirmed by two other authors, Nicholas IV Mouzalon and Theodore of Smyrna,⁶³ who, following Grumel’s reconstruction,⁶⁴ are also thought to have taken part in the discussions during Grossolano’s visit to Constantinople.

Eustratios’s dialogue also gives the opportunity to refer to our perception of the Greek attitude towards the Latin interpretation of the procession of the Holy Spirit in the twelfth century. Reading through the reconstructions of the debates, one is given the impression that, apart from Theophylact of Ohrid, generally mentioned as one of the very few Byzantines who had an irenic approach towards the

Latins,⁶⁵ there was a compact army of strenuous and aggressive defenders of the procession from the Father only. It is quite patent that this was not the reality; if we need an extra piece of evidence, there is a small but precious passage in Eustratios which attests to the presence of Greeks who accepted the procession from the Son already in 1112 ('Because I hear some, even of ours, who are near the addition of the Latins').⁶⁶ This detail forces us to change our ideas of a uniform Byzantine approach against the Latins, and helps us to see the first half of the twelfth century, rather than the second, as a plausible dating for the dialogues by Niketas, and perhaps even to give more consideration to the possibility that the *chartophylax* to whom Theophylact of Ohrid addressed one of his letters was our Niketas,⁶⁷ including in this way our author in a circle of theologians who debated with the Latins in the spirit of trying to find a solution, rather than more merely defeating the Latin 'heretics'.

In this context, if we go back to the reconstruction of the biography of Niketas of Thessalonike, there is another possible connection with contemporary events that should be highlighted. If we believe that Niketas of Thessalonike was *chartophylax* around 1120 and metropolitan around 1133, and we know from the episcopal list that there are at least three other metropolitans after him before Basil of Ohrid, who was metropolitan from at least 1157, we may suppose that he was metropolitan roughly between 1133 and 1140. Therefore, Niketas was a prominent figure around 1135/36 when the dialogues between Anselm of Havelberg and Niketas of Nicomedia took place in Constantinople,⁶⁸ while we must suppose that he did not live long enough to see the discussion of Anselm with Basil of Ohrid in 1154.⁶⁹ So the *Dialogues* by Anselm of Havelberg are the last account of encounters that should be compared with the *Six Dialogues* of Niketas of Thessalonike.⁷⁰

Before proceeding, it must be emphasised that Anselm's work is not a contemporary account, like the texts we have seen related to the visit of Peter Grossolano, but was compiled around 1150 at the request of Pope Eugenius II. However, what interests us is to see how the Latin text is constructed and whether we can recognise some of the patterns we have seen in the Greek writings. Anselm's Greek interlocutor, Niketas of Nicomedia, is quite faithful to the image of a Greek theologian we get from the other Byzantine texts; he opposes the *Filioque* starting from general principles: the *monarchia* of the Father, the idea that the *Filioque* implies two principles for the Spirit and so on. But the Latin speaker, Anselm himself, is also faithful to the reconstruction we have outlined in the present contribution; for example, he replies to the Greek arguments citing John 14.8–9, a very successful response as it was exemplified by the other authors who has been mentioned above. But there are also passages that link Niketas of Thessalonike and Anselm, similarities that made Barmine write: 'Ces faibles ressemblances permettent tout au plus de supposer que Nicéetas de Maronée a entendu parler des discussions d'Anselme, sans en avoir eu la connaissance exacte';⁷¹ for example, the idea of order (τάξις) in the Trinity – not a topic generally debated by Greek authors – or the question *secundum quod* (κατὰ τὸ) the Holy Spirit proceeds.⁷² However, it should be stressed that I am not suggesting that Anselm is a source for Niketas, but only that these were the

topics debated and of which we can find traces in contemporary authors. The fact that each of these authors deals with these themes in a different way should not create a problem for our analysis; on the contrary, it should be taken as a sign of ‘originality’ in a discussion that because of its very nature is expected to be conducted within the limits of the tradition. It is not by chance that one of the most cited passages from the Old Testament is Proverbs 22.28, ‘Do not move an ancient boundary stone set up by your ancestors’.

Anselm’s *Anticimenon* or *Dialogues* is also intriguing because there are a couple of passages that clearly show how Anselm can be considered, again generally speaking, a trustworthy witness. Niketas of Nicomedia asks about Anselm’s interpretation of the word ‘originator’ (προβολεύς),⁷³ and Anselm replies, ‘I do not know what *proboleus*, may mean, since I am not Greek’,⁷⁴ or later, when again Niketas asks, ‘What do you say about this, that some sages among the Greeks say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son?’⁷⁵ and Anselm’s first reaction is, ‘I have never heard it!’⁷⁶ These passages make me think that if the *Dialogues* were only a fake, embellished, account, Anselm would not have written this kind of answer. Another example may be the tirade against the use of metaphors,⁷⁷ which indeed we have seen was common in Greek texts. These passages seem to prove that Anselm is not inventing a discussion, but rather that the general contents of the dialogue can be considered reliable, an example of Magdalino’s ‘rhetorical journalism’. Of course, one could argue that the final defeat of Niketas of Nicomedia cannot be considered realistic; however, I would argue that if not the defeat, certainly the fact that they agreed on the necessity of summoning a council to reach a decision on the *Filioque* could be a realistic account of events. In any case, we can use Anselm of Havelberg as a counterproof for the Byzantine texts and to complete our survey of the topics that were discussed during these debates.

Conclusions

This brief survey of the twelfth-century literature on the procession of the Holy Spirit is necessarily incomplete and primarily aimed at placing the *Dialogues* by Niketas of Thessalonike in context: a monograph on the anti-Latin texts written in the Komnenian period certainly remains a *desideratum*.⁷⁸ My rapid analysis nevertheless demonstrates some interesting points. Niketas introduces the *Dialogues* saying that the two speakers expound ‘their principles’ (τὰς ἰδίας ἀρχάς). What does this mean? Like Eustratios of Nicaea and John Phournes, as well as Nicholas of Methone (Bishop of Methone from c. 1150, d. 1160–66) and Andronikos Kamateros (c.1110–80), Niketas opens his text by explaining the differences between the common characteristics of the Godhead and the personal characteristics of the three hypostases. It is clear that these definitions go back to the patristic age, that Photios had already insisted on the confusion of the personal characteristics and that Niketas Byzantios also based his *Capita syllogistica* on this distinction. However, it seems that the twelfth-century literature on the *Filioque* must conform to a certain format: a text on the procession of

the Holy Spirit must open with the declaration of the fundamental theological statements on the Trinity as unit, on each person of the Godhead, and on their common and personal characteristics. Once these fundamentals are agreed upon then the discussion can start, but we should understand that this kind of opening is already an attempt at reconciliation, or at least at building a common basis on which to arrange a dialogue. It is clear that 'dialogue' in this context refers to both the literary genre and the attempt at resolving the differences, that is, the possibility of opening a space for an agreed solution based on a common statement of faith. Niketas follows a very neat structure: general discussions, metaphors, patristic exegesis, a layout that is certainly the result of a carefully planned exposition and of a deep familiarity with the other anti-Latin texts. But what about the Latin theology represented in the dialogues? Does this really reflect the point of view of Western theologians? Can one detect some influences of Latin theology? As I mentioned briefly before, Alexei Barmine compared the Greek dialogues to the works of two Latin authors, Anselm of Canterbury and Anselm of Havelberg.⁷⁹ He did not find any similarity between the approaches of Anselm of Canterbury and Niketas, while he detected some similarities between Niketas and Anselm of Havelberg; as stated above, I agree with his view that Niketas had heard of the discussions without knowing their exact content; as I have tried to argue in this paper, although it would be very fruitful to delineate trends common to East and West during the period, we do not need to find a *verbatim* correspondence between authors. One characteristic in particular deserves careful analysis, which I have already mentioned, namely the attention devoted by the twelfth-century authors to theological vocabulary. This seems to be common to the entire Komnenian literature on the *Filioque*. Every word used to describe the procession is defined with great precision: for example, the difference between 'bestower' (χορηγός) and 'originator' (προβολεύς), and between 'mission' (ἀποστολή) and 'procession' (ἐκπόρευσις). What we need to analyse further is the relationship between the Greek and Latin approaches; I only mention briefly a recent article published by D'Onofrio in 2012 that deals with the 'return of metaphysics in the West'. In this context, the author emphasises the importance of definitions for Gilbert de la Porrée (as well as his followers, the so-called Porretans amongst whom Hugo Eteriano, the Latin advisor of Manuel Komnenos, may be numbered), who elaborated a new approach to the divine truth, founding a new science: theology, based on rigorous definitions of the technical terms used to describe the Godhead and its attributes.⁸⁰ If we take into consideration more than theology and philosophy and try to understand the overall *Zeitgeist*, we may also cite the renewed interest in etymological compilations in the eleventh- and twelfth-century Byzantium exemplified by the *Etymologicum Symeonis*, *Magnum*, *Gudianum*.⁸¹ Another point that deserves more attention is the use of metaphors, especially in relation to what Chenu called 'the symbolist mentality';⁸² can we find some lines of connection here? It is clear that we need to be cautious, and find new evidence before arriving at a definitive statement, but I am certain that a detailed study would propose a fruitful definition of a cultural milieu common to East and West, with more in common than expected.

Notes

- * I would like to acknowledge the financial support of the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research (MIUR) that is funding the three-year research project ‘The Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries as Forerunners of a United and Divided Europe: Dialogues and Disputes between the Byzantine East and the Latin West’. The research group formed by Alessandra Bucossi, Luigi D’Amelia, Pietro Podolak and Anna Zago at the Università Ca’ Foscari Venezia and at the Università di Pisa is working on critical editions of Niketas’s *Dialogues* and Hugo Eteriano’s *De sancto et immortalis Deo*.
- 1 The word *logos* meaning ‘dialogue’ or ‘discussion’ is already attested in classical authors; see LSJ s.v. λόγος.
 - 2 Niketas of Thessalonike, *De processione*, PG 139:169: ὁ μὲν σκοπὸς τοῦ λόγου συζητήσις καὶ συνεξέτασις περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἐκπορεύσεως, καὶ λύσις τῆς μέσον ἡμῶν καὶ τῶν Λατίνων ἀμυβολίας περὶ τοῦ τοιοῦτου ζητήματος, πρὸς ἀναίρεσιν ἀφορῶσα τῆς ἐκ τούτου γενομένης ἀμφοῖν διαστάσεως. ὁ δὲ χαρακτήρ διαλογικὸς, πρέπων τῇ λεπτολογίᾳ τῶν δεομένων ἀκριβεστέρας συσκέψεως ζητημάτων, καὶ μάλιστα τῇ περὶ τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν δογμάτων συνεξέτασει ἀρμοδιώτατος, καὶ πρὸς εὗρεσιν τῆς ἀληθείας τοῖς μὴ ἐρίζειν ἐθέλουσι χρησιμώτατος καὶ ἀναγκασιώτατος· διὸ καὶ τῶν μεγάλων διδασκάλων τινὲς τῷ τοιοῦτῳ εἶδει τοῦ λόγου ἐχρήσαντο; my translation.
 - 3 Jugie, ‘Notes de littérature’, 408–16.
 - 4 Kamateros, *Sacrum Armamentarium*, XXIX–XXXIII.
 - 5 Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1115. This manuscript is not described in any catalogue. At fol. 2v: Τοῦ Μακαριωτάτου Μητροπολίτου Θεσσαλονίκης Νικήτα τοῦ τοῦ Μαρωνείας λόγοι διάφοροι πρὸς διάλογον ἐσχηματισμένοι περὶ τῆς ἐκπορεύσεως τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος. At fol. 58v: Τοῦτ’ ἐστὶ τὸ προοίμιον τῶν ὀπισθεν διαλεκτικῶν λόγων τοῦ μακαριωτάτου Θεσσαλονίκης καὶ γεγονότος χαρτοφύλακος τῆς μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας κυροῦ Νικήτα τοῦ Μαρωνείας τῶν περὶ τῆς ἐκπορεύσεως τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος· ὧν τὰ πρόσωπα Γραικὸς καὶ Λατῖνος.
 - 6 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 31.37. At fol. 22r: Τοῦ μακαριωτάτου Θεσσαλονίκης καὶ γεγονότος χαρτοφύλακος τῆς μεγάλης ἐκκλησίας κυροῦ Νικήτα τοῦ τοῦ Μαρωνείας ἐξέτασις περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐκπορεύσεως. Bandini, *Catalogus codicum Laurentianae*, 114–19; Harlfinger, *Aristoteles graecus*, 179–202.
 - 7 Laur. 31.37.
 - 8 Vat. gr. 1115.
 - 9 ODB 3:1482 s.v. ‘Niketas “of Maroneia”’.
 - 10 Pachymeres, *Relations historiques*, 2:603.17–20: ἐμπίπτει καὶ βίβλος ἄλλη τοῦ τοῦ Μαρωνείας Νικήτα, ὃν ἡ μὲν μεγάλη ἐκκλησία ἐν τιμίῳ εἶχε καὶ χαρτοφύλακα, ὕστερον δὲ καὶ ἡ μεγαλόπολις Θεσσαλονίκη ἀρχιερέα ἐπλοῦτησεν, ἐν ὅλοις πέντε λόγοις τὰ τῶν θείων γραφῶν ὑπὲρ τῆς εἰρήνης τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν ἀνελίττουσα; my translation.
 - 11 DO 58.106, no. 2174 = Laurent, *Le Corpus des Sceaux*, 3, no. 1647: σφραγὶς Νικήτα / χαρτοφύλακος πέλω.
 - 12 See also Darrouzès, *Recherches sur les ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ*, 510 n. 3.
 - 13 From fol. 177r. Mercati, *Bybliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae*, 196–7.
 - 14 Petit, ‘Èvèques de Thessalonique’, EO 4: 136–45 and 212–21; 5: 26–33, 90–7, 150–6, 212–19; 6: 292–8; Petit, ‘Synodicon de Thessalonique’, 236–54. See the same list in Gouillard, ‘Synodikon’, 114.
 - 15 At fol. 219r. Omont, *Inventaire sommaire*, 27.
 - 16 Petit, ‘Èvèques de Thessalonique’, EO 5: 28.
 - 17 Jugie, ‘Notes de littérature’, 408–16.
 - 18 Kislas, *Nil Cabasilas et son traité*, Réfutation 14, 7. See also Jugie, ‘Notes de littérature’, 412–13.
 - 19 Hugo Eteriano, PL 202:388B.
 - 20 Hugo Eteriano, PL 202:227–28.

- 21 It could be, however, that Hugo uses these words because he is reaching the end of his long treatise.
- 22 *ODB* 2:754 s.v. 'Eustathios of Thessalonike'.
- 23 *DTC* 11:473–77 s.v. 'Nicétas de Maronée'.
- 24 Petit, 'Synodicon', 246; Laurent, 'Liste épiscopale', 305. Same list in Gouillard, 'Le synodikon', 114. Laurent stated that there are bishops who were excluded because of their behaviour, for example Ioannikios Kydones, who in his opinion was erased from the list because of his sympathy for the ecclesiastical policy of Michael VIII.
- 25 For details, see 'Sources' at the end of this chapter.
- 26 Niketas of Thessalonike, *PG* 139:169.
- 27 Niketas of Thessalonike, *PG* 139:172B: τὰς ἰδίας ἀρχάς.
- 28 See a recent summary of Photios's arguments in Siecienski, *Filioque*, 100–4.
- 29 Niketas of Thessalonike, *PG* 139:172B: εἶτα καὶ εἰς τὸν διὰ παραδειγμάτων εἰκονισμόν εἰσβάλλουσιν ἄμφο· συνήθης δὲ καὶ οὗτος ὁ τρόπος τοῖς θεολόγοις τοῦ λόγου.
- 30 Kamateros, *Sacrum Armamentarium*, 71–3.
- 31 Photios, *De Spiritus sancti Mystagogia*, *PG* 102:280–392. I do not want to enter the vexed question of authorship here; for the purpose of this paper, I consider it from the point of view of a Byzantine reader who had in his hands a text attributed to the famous patriarch. See recently Kolbaba, *Inventing Latin Heretics*.
- 32 Niketas Byzantios, *Capita syllogistica*, 89, 97, etc.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 84–138.
- 34 Niketas Stethatos, *De processione*, 379.
- 35 *Ibid.*, 381.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 390.
- 37 Anselm, *Anticimenon*, book 2, 85.
- 38 Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I*, 21.
- 39 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 36: τοῦ μοναχοῦ κυρίου Ἰωάννου τοῦ Φουρνῆ καὶ πρώτου τοῦ ὄρους Γάνου πνευματικοῦ ἀντιρρητικῆ ἀπολογία πρὸς τὰ λεχθέντα παρὰ τοῦ Μεδιολάνων ἀρχιεπισκόπου Πέτρου, περὶ τῆς τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος ἐκπορεύσεως, ἐνώπιον τοῦ βασιλέως κυρίου Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ καὶ πάσης τῆς συνόδου καὶ τῆς συγκλήτου.
- 40 Grumel, 'Voyage de Pierre Grossolano', 27–8.
- 41 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 46: ταῦτα λέγων, ἀρχιεπίσκοπε . . .
- 42 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 36–7.
- 43 Grossolano, *Oratio ad Alexium*, *PG* 127:911–19.
- 44 Grossolano, *Oratio ad Alexium*, 911 and Grossolano, *Acephalus Tractatus*, 351–52.
- 45 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 38.
- 46 Grossolano, *Oratio ad Alexium*, 916CD.
- 47 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 41–2; Grossolano, *Oratio ad Alexium*, 914D.
- 48 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 44: ἃς γὰρ λέγεις εἶναι δόξας, ιδιότητές εἰσιν ὑποστάσεων; my translation.
- 49 Phournes, *Oratio antirrhetica*, 46.
- 50 Seides, *Adversus Latinos*, 28–9.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 31.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 32.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 33.
- 55 Grossolano, *Acephalus Tractatus*, 351.
- 56 Seides, *Adversus Latinos*, 39.
- 57 Barmine, 'Source méconnue', 231–43.
- 58 Eustratios, *First Oration* (*De processione Spiritus sancti*); *Second Oration* (*Oratio secunda de Spiritu sancto*); *Third Oration* (*Oratio ad archiepiscopum Mediolani de processione Spiritus sancti*), 47–198.
- 59 See Grumel, 'Autour de voyage de Pierre Grossolano', 26–7. Alexey Barmine's critical edition of these texts is in press.

- 60 Eustratios, *Third Oration*, 84: τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔκθεσις τῆς γεγονυίας διαλέξεως ἐνώπιον τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος Κυρίου Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ πρὸς Γροσσολάνον Ἀρχιεπίσκοπον Μεδιολάνων; my translation.
- 61 Eustratios, *Third Oration*, 91–3.
- 62 See, for example, Eustratios, *Third Oration*, 95–9.
- 63 Mouzalon, *De processione Spiritus sancti*, syllogisms at 311–29. Theodore of Smyrna, Moscow, GIM, Sinod. gr. 366 (Vlad. 239) has a collection of syllogisms, fols. 45v–46r. Vladimir, *Sistematičeskoe opisanie rukopisej*, 311–14, Fonkič and Poljakov, *Grečeskie rukopisi*, 86–7.
- 64 Grumel, ‘Voyage de Pierre Grossolano’, 30–2.
- 65 See, for example, Kolbaba, ‘Orthodoxy of the Latins’, 199–214.
- 66 Eustratios, *First Oration*, 68: ἐπεὶ δὲ τινὰς καὶ τῶν καθ’ ἡμᾶς τῇ προσθήκῃ προσκεῖσθαι τῶν Λατίνων ἠνώτισται; my translation.
- 67 According to Laurent, *Le Corpus des Sceaux*, 3:24. Theophylact’s *Letter*, 83 may be addressed to Niketas of Thessalonike, a hypothesis not shared by Gautier, who dates the letter around 1094 (Theophylact, *Lettres*, 93).
- 68 Anselm, *Dialogi*, PL 188:1139–248.
- 69 Dialogue edited in Basil of Ohrid, *Dialogi Anselmi Havelbergensis episcopi*, ed. J. Schmidt. Munich, 1901.
- 70 From this survey, I exclude Nicholas of Methone who wrote extensively on the procession, but whose *floruit* was during Manuel’s reign, although Dräseke in his ‘Nikolaos von Methone’ dated these texts to the time of the visit of Anselm in 1136. In addition, assuming that the reconstruction of the life of Niketas I presented above is reliable, I exclude from this survey Andronikos Kamateros, who at this point I believe was heavily inspired by Niketas’s text, correcting my previous hypothesis based on the idea that the two were contemporary. I intend to return to this topic soon in other publications.
- 71 Barmine, ‘Source méconnue’, 235.
- 72 Ibid., 234.
- 73 Anselm, *Anticimenon*, 110.
- 74 Ibid., 111.
- 75 Ibid., 150.
- 76 Ibid., 151.
- 77 Ibid., 152–3.
- 78 The most recent monograph on the *Filioque* in English, for example, dedicates a very short chapter to the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth century, Sicienski, *Filioque*, 111–31.
- 79 Barmine, ‘Source méconnue’, 231–6.
- 80 D’Onofrio, ‘Quando la metafisica tornò in Occidente’, 79 and passim.
- 81 For a general introduction, see Baldi, ‘Sub voce ἐτυμολογία’, 359–74.
- 82 Chenu, ‘Symbolist Mentality’, 99–145.

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- Eustratios of Nicaea: *Oratio 1: De processione spiritus sancti* / Λόγος πρὸς τοὺς λέγοντας, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκπορεύεται, κατασκευάζων ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ, οὐχὶ δὲ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ Υἱοῦ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκπορεύεται; *Oratio 2: Oratio secunda de spiritu sancto* / Τοῦ αὐτοῦ λόγος δεῦτερος περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος; *Oratio 3: Oratio ad archiepiscopum Mediolani de processione spiritus sancti* / Τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔκθεσις τῆς γεγονυίας διαλέξεως ἐνώπιον τοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος Κυρίου Ἀλεξίου τοῦ Κομνηνοῦ πρὸς Γροσολάνον Ἀρχιεπίσκοπον Μεδιολάνων περὶ τῆς τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος ἐκπορεύσεως, πρὸ τῶν ἀντιρρητικῶν ῥηθεῖσα, ed. A. Demetrakopoulos, Ἑκκλησιαστικὴ Βιβλιοθήκη. Vol. 1. Leipzig: Otto Bigand, 1866, repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1965, 47–198.
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11 Theodore Prodromos in the Garden of Epicurus

*Eric Cullhed**

As a reader of Lucian, Theodore Prodromos was not the Jonathan Swift or Voltaire but rather the Giacomo Leopardi of the middle Byzantine period – *mutatis mutandis*, of course. In the *Operette Morali*, the Italian poet and philologist entered the philosophical laboratory of the dialogue in order to experiment with subjects central to his thinking. Leopardi (1798–1837) embraced Enlightenment thought and radical materialism as the only true philosophical foundation; yet he recognised the dolefulness of this conclusion and was painfully aware of the ironic fact that the hedonist is less likely than anyone else to attain happiness in this universe, precisely because of his demystified self-awareness as a vanishingly small part of an infinite continuum of matter and vacuum. Thus, Leopardi appreciated the revivifying power of illusions as a means to temporarily re-enchant the disenchanted world of materialism, without ever escaping it for good. In Lucian, he found an attitude of ironic resignation in the face of this reality, and a fictional instrument to ponder and even enjoy, however fleetingly, man's suffering at the hands of nature.¹

Similar concerns, yet in an inverted form, prompted Prodromos (c.1100–1160) to enter the same textual laboratory some seven hundred years earlier, in twelfth-century Constantinople.² The dialogue *Amarantos, or the Erotic Desires of an Old Man* presents us with a conversation between four characters in ancient Athens. As the story opens, a young man named Hermocles arrives late to a meeting with his two friends Diophantos and Philolaos. These two are followers of Democritus, whereas Hermocles refutes materialism but nevertheless embraces Epicurus's materialistically grounded ethics of pleasure. The reason for his lateness, Hermocles reveals, is that he has spent all morning in a garden. This alludes to 'The Garden', Epicurus's philosophical school situated in the outskirts of Athens. The young man is a dreamer and declares that even now, in the company of his friends, he finds himself 'by that fountain, touching the narcissus and plucking the hyacinth'.³ However, the only thing that Hermocles desires from Democritus is his proverbial laughter, in order to 'deride those "conventions" and "vacuums" and "atoms"'.⁴ These words launch a fierce debate between Hermocles and his materialist companions. But just as the discussion gets going, a new person arrives at the scene, an Athenian named Amarantos. Diophantos immediately asks the newcomer to act as adjudicator in their dispute, but Amarantos refuses and says

that he prefers to tell them an amusing story. The dialogue takes a sudden turn and, accompanied by incessant laughter, Amarantos tells them about a wedding he attended last night, when the old celibate philosopher Stratocles suddenly and shamelessly married a young girl. After the account, Philolaos succinctly praises the storyteller and the dialogue comes to an end.

At first sight, we easily get the impression that the text throws a number of questions at the reader that are never resolved after Amarantos's arrival. A recent editor of this text, Tommaso Migliorini, characterises its structure as 'an unbalanced framework, broad in the beginning and narrow at the end'.⁵ As Migliorini sees it, the narrative moves from an unusual debate between Democriteans and Epicureans to an invective against an old philosopher and ends 'with total abandonment of the initial philosophical discussions on atomism'. As a possible solution, he suggests that the quarrelling atomists and the old philosopher who suddenly breaks with his principles poke fun at contemporary, irrecoverable theological and philosophical disputes in which Prodromos was involved.⁶ In this chapter, I will suggest that there is no need to resort to such defeatist hermeneutics. The *Amarantos* is not a personal attack but a dialogical exploration of one of the most frequent concerns in Prodromos's writings. I will develop this argument in four short steps. The first section offers a simple but crucial textual emendation and discussion on the dialogue's relationship to other Prodromic works. The second section provides an analysis of the allusions to theatrical performance in the story about Stratocles. The third section examines the references to poverty and alienation from nature in Prodromos's works. Finally, the fourth section suggests an interpretation of Amarantos's name and thereby of the dialogue as a whole.

Atomism, automatism and divine providence

What are the questions at stake in the introductory dispute? Migliorini's interpretation rests on a notion of this section as a rather confused 'conflict between atomists',⁷ but it is vital to emphasise that Hermocles is explicitly *not* an atomist. Migliorini's hesitation can be traced to his unawareness of a textual corruption in the manuscript conserving the *Amarantos* (Vat. gr. 305, s. XIII – henceforth V – fols. 59v–64r), which occurs at a pivotal point in the dialogue, the moment when Amarantos arrives at the scene. I would suggest that we read the text as follows:

DIOPHANTOS: To be sure, if you do not stop deriding Democritus with the laughter of Democritus, you will soon cry the tears of Heraclitus for your own sake. For after announcing that you would refute the doctrines of Democritus, you proceeded by turning your back on this announcement and hailed down in showers of ridicule on the philosopher.

HERMOYLES: [the ms. and Migliorini's critical edition read 'Philolaos']: But if only you would check your anger, I think that I would very easily convince you to revere the teachings of Epicurus but reject Democritus.

PHILOLAOS: [the ms. reads 'Hermocles']: You could hardly carve out all of Mount Athos from top to bottom, dear friend!

- HERMOCLES: [the ms. reads Philolaos]: Marvelous Zeus! Who is the man walking eagerly in our direction? Could it be Amarantos the Athenian?
- PHILOLAOS: [no change of person indicated in the ms.]: Of his own accord,⁸ benevolent Fates! We must present our debate to so prominent an adjudicator. Greetings, dear Amarantos! See if you can resolve this dispute regarding the principles of nature between me and Hermocles here. You already know that I am a follower of Democritus and Hermocles of Epicurus.⁹

It is not difficult to form a hypothesis as to how this error arose. The first stage is obvious: a copyist to the ancestor of our manuscript accidentally omitted the last change of person to Philolaos. This would not be the only instance where this happens in the texts of V,¹⁰ and the phrase 'By his own accord, benevolent Fates!' is very likely to introduce the response of another interlocutor. This error resulted in Hermocles illogically referring to himself in the third person: 'me and Hermocles here'. Therefore, a scribe incorrectly altered three names in order to change the sequence of persons so that it would end with Philolaos rather than Hermocles. Seeing that Migliorini did not detect this error and followed the text of the manuscript, in which Philolaos strangely wishes to teach Hermocles to 'value the teachings of Epicurus and reject Democritus', it is easy to see why he paraphrases the opening of the texts as an abstruse atomistic quarrel.

With this textual stumbling block removed, the two positions become clear. Diophantos and Philolaos are Democritean materialists and atheists. They hold that the world is a conglomeration of atoms moved by no external cause and that all things happen of their own accord. Hermocles, on the other hand, is an idealist: he believes that the world is created and governed by a rational mind; yet, he draws no ethical conclusions from this conviction and revels in hedonism nonetheless. To be sure, the question whether or not divine providence existed was a rhetorical one in the Christian society of which Prodromos formed part. But the difficulty of reconciling the existence of evil with that of God continually induced philosophers and theologians to raise it as a problem worthy of reflection nonetheless.¹¹ The Lucianic tradition had accommodated this intellectual activity before. The archbishop and philologist Arethas of Caesarea (c.850–935 CE), who composed scholia on the works of Lucian, furiously reacted to the dialogue *Zeus Rants* (Ζεὺς τραγῳδός). This piece centres on a public debate between the Epicurean philosopher Damis and Timocles the Stoic arguing for and against the existence of the gods. At a certain point in this piece, Timocles argues that the universe would not subsist without a guide, just as a ship would go under without a steersman. Damis counters that the capsized vessel is indeed a suitable image for human life, referring to seemingly unmotivated instances of social inequality and injustice in order to disprove the existence of divine providence. The Stoic is struck dumb by the Epicurean's argument, and this shortcoming invited a response of Arethas. He added a scholium to this section, accusing Lucian for reasoning like an animal or child when equating bodily pleasures with the good.¹² Wealth is not a reward for virtue, nor is poverty a punishment for lack thereof, but the Divine subjects all

individuals to their appropriate trials. Decadent Sardanapalus was not better off than noble Socrates, for whom luxury had only been an obstacle in his search for wisdom and goodness.¹³

As we will see, a similar but somewhat more complex chain of thought constitutes one of the most pervasive themes in Prodromos's oeuvre. To give but a first example, in his *Verses of Complaint against Providence*, the poet chastises the impulse to deny that the totality of the universe is guided by a benevolent mind on the basis that individual beings suffer, invoking the ancient atomists as the main representatives of this fallacy (43–50). Nevertheless, the poet cannot resist complaining about his own experience of injustice: lowly artisans enjoy great economic success, whereas he and other intellectuals throughout history, including Socrates, have suffered great poverty and hardships (53–126).¹⁴ He argues that it is human meanness and greed, not the Divine, that constitutes the cause of these ills (127–63), but in the end he curbs these speculative accusations since God's plan is ultimately unknowable. The introductory dispute in the *Amarantos* signals that it is this familiar theme that will be subject to Lucianic experimentation.

‘All the world's a stage’

Amarantos's arrival does not implicate an abandonment of the opposition between materialist automatism and divine providence, but in telling his story, the newcomer offers a subtle investigation into the very problem at hand. The key to seeing the connection between the dialogue's two sections lies in the frequent references to theatrical performance in the latter part. The argument calls for a brief recapitulation of the story, focusing on these elements. Amarantos has attended Stratocles's lectures for years. He recalls that the aged philosopher used to call his own body a prison that hindered him from pure access to reality, and that marriage would only increase this corporeal captivity. He often railed at the female sex, recalling Clytemnestra, Helen and Phaedra and claiming that women have filled human life with ‘dramas and poems’.¹⁵ Amarantos stresses Stratocles's persuasiveness and skills in oratory, as well as his appearance. His long beard, crooked neck, wrinkled brow and ochre-coloured face had convinced each and all that he was a true philosopher. ‘But yesterday’, Amarantos continues, ‘the drama was unveiled, the scene removed and the truth paraded in the open air’.¹⁶ Amarantos had been at home reading the *Axiochus* when suddenly he saw the notary Chaeremon on the street outside. Chaeremon had been summoned to Stratocles's house for unknown reasons, and suspecting that the aged philosopher laid on his deathbed, he groaned loudly. However, Amarantos expresses doubts about the notary's sincerity through his phrasing, claiming that he ‘played the part of a man in grief’.¹⁷ When they arrived to Stratocles's house, they were surprised to find that the old man was all but dying, and at first Amarantos mistook his teacher for a jester:

His cheeks were coloured with pale orchil in the projecting part and convexities of the wrinkles, but they conserved most of the former ochre in the

hollows and concavities, since the colour could not fully penetrate into the recesses that were shut close by the swelling. This resulted in a ridiculous mixture of ochre and rouge. His hair was curly and reddish, whereas most of his beard had been removed with a razor, giving him a rounded form. His eyelashes were made dark with dye, which is certainly not befitting of a syllogismising philosopher. For the moisture of his sore eyes ran in dark streams, quickly revealing the deceit.¹⁸

The wedding proceeded and the young bride had to endure Stratocles's caresses and drooling kisses. The learned banqueters secretly derided the old bridegroom amongst themselves, but they also delivered speeches and wedding songs that celebrated the 'young' groom. At the end of the banquet, Stratocles delivered a speech, haphazardly invoking Empedoclean principles to criticise his previous asceticism and referring to the historical *exemplum* of Penelope rather than Clytemnestra to praise women. The couple entered the wedding chamber and the guests went home.

What does Amarantos's reply to his interlocutors amount to? In a nutshell, he is saying that social appearances cannot be trusted since all men and women are actors on the stage of life. The implication of his story is that Stratocles was never a true philosopher, but a jester playing a ridiculous farce all along. Yesterday he simply changed his makeup from ochre to rouge. Moreover, his speeches had never been true but *persuasive*, fuelled by sophistry and rhetorical manoeuvres that he can easily reverse to suit his needs. Of course, Stratocles's transformation would have satirical resonances with the Komnenian intellectual elite for which this piece was performed: we may recall popular stereotypes such as the long-bearded, sanctimonious monk on the one hand,¹⁹ and the clean-shaven, arrogant and perverted Norman count on the other.²⁰ As for the satirical and social aspects of the young bride, we could also point to affinities with the later Cretan satirical poem *The Haplessly Married Girl*.²¹ But the cosmic dimensions of this satire are far more important in order to grasp the dialogue in the context of Prodromos's other works. In the treatise *On Those Who Condemn Providence Because of Poverty*, he offers the same basic argument as in the aforementioned *Verses of Lamentation*: what appears to be injustice in this world must not lead us to accept the 'madness of Democritus' (1297a) and believe that Providence does not exist. Human beings cannot grasp the Divine Plan. In order to illustrate the deceptive nature of human affairs, Prodromos refers to Constantinopolitan artisans, comparing their lowly appearance with actors playing the part of black slaves on stage. Prodromos goes on to bewail that this ignoble but wealthy kind of man enjoys greater success than an intellectual and easily attracts a young beautiful wife, appearing like Hephaestus beside his Aphrodite (1294a). (We should note in passing that the exact same phrase is uttered as a joke about Stratocles and his young bride Myrillis by one of the learned banqueters in the *Amarantos*, intertextually associating him with shallow sophistry and banausic occupations.) Once again, Prodromos concludes that it is better to own the laughter of Democritus than the riches of Midas, better to laugh at the world than succumb to its cruelty, but this

time he also goes further than in his *Verses of Lamentation*, stressing the difficulty of telling the wise man from the fool:

Tell me, have you seen an old man, aged as if he were born in the days of Saturn, wrinkled in the mantle, displaying Pythagorean ochre in his face, leaning upon a crooked fennel stalk like Silenus? What would you say about him? That he is meet for God? That he is sacred? That nothing can be guided by Providence unless such men are wealthy? I know that you would say this and more. But I have seen that such a man is far from sacred. For as soon as you notice that he has stolen his pet birds – the ones I caught from his hand, or the ones I pulled out from under his cloak – (?) you see that we human beings mostly live by playing a part. We are deceived about the ass in the lion's skin and the weasel in the wedding dress. Thus there is a deep theatric scene around us; we act ourselves and others act for us.²²

Even the man who appears to be wise can turn out to have been playing a part in this cosmic illusion of the corporeal world. Only laughter, detachment from wealth and serious engagement with all branches of learning can mitigate this puzzlement, and all Prodromos asks for in the end of the treatise is enough money to acquire books. This ancient topos, the dramatical simile of life, was known to Prodromos primarily from Lucian and Synesius.²³ He utilised it in a number of other contexts, notably the satirical piece *The Ignorant, or the Self-Proclaimed Grammarian*.²⁴ Here, a harsh philosopher attacks the false pretentiousness of an unnamed *grammatikos*, asking him a series of septic questions concerning the definition of his discipline, its methods and fundamental texts, but the grammarian is unable to answer them and quickly revealed as a fraud. The text is a mixture of Lucian's 'uneducated book-collector', Sextus Empiricus's *Against the Grammarians* (esp. 1.60–72) and the biblical imperative, 'Do not be wise in thine own eyes' (*Proverbs* 3.7). But the point of the whole piece is to underline that stripping off the mask of such a charlatan is the duty of a philosopher. It also constitutes an important element of Prodromos's novel *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, where the virtuous protagonists trust in Hermes's divine promise about their impending union despite the misfortunes they must endure through the stormy 'drama of life'.²⁵ The barbarian pirates, on the other hand, deceive each other with theatrical tricks (4.312; 5.73–79).

In this regard, Prodromos differs from Arethas in his reception of Lucian. Arethas rashly equates Damis with the author of the dialogue – ironically the same mistake that he accused Lucian of committing with Euripides²⁶ – and censured the Syrian satirist's presumed espousal of atheism. Prodromos, on the other hand, discerned as the most important element amidst the multitude of positions in the Lucianic corpus a critique against human pretensions to absolute knowledge about the nature of things. In *On Those Who Condemn Providence Because of Poverty*, this is explicitly stated:

Perhaps the inequality of [human] affairs has persuaded you to reject Providence? But for this very reason you ought to have concluded the opposite,

that Providence exists. For just as a musical rhythm and melody could never exist if all notes were exclusively low notes or high notes, but harmony is usually brought about by interweaving unequal notes, so the totality of our life is musically arranged by Providence through the inequality of [human] affairs. Instead, the cause of these things that beset us is ignorance, which even the Syrian rhetorician called a terrible thing, not lying in this one instance. For we cannot fly up to the aether, purely behold with our own eyes the causes of things and the rationales according to which Providence arranges the universe with wisdom and knowledge. Therefore, we determine that the universe lacks order, but we ought to realize that it is impossible for a being that is often unable to perceive even human intentions to understand the providential rationale.²⁷

For Prodromos, Lucian's true voice is that of the introduction to *One Should Not Lightly Believe in Slander*: all men 'are walkers in darkness', and this ignorance is the cause of distress. Unlike Menippus in the *Icaromenippus*, we cannot fly up to the heavens and converse with the divine, but are stuck in the seemingly discordant but in truth – at least for Prodromos – harmonious performance of earthly life.

Manure of gold and dirt of silver

The dramatic simile of life must have had a natural appeal to a performer in the literary climate of the Komnenian age. The focus in this cultural configuration on persuasion, entertainment, playfulness and celebration of lordship often induced its actors to reinvigorate the ancient dilemma of truth versus opinion or intellectual independence versus corrupting reliance on patronage.²⁸ By invoking the idea that all people are by necessity actors playing a part on the cosmic scene, this dilemma could be mitigated. We can compare Prodromos's several returns to the motif with Eustathios of Thessalonike's remarkable *On Hypokrisis*. Eustathios does not condemn dissimulation *tout court*, but rather he argues that all men engage in this practice and maintains that hypocrisy can be as virtuous as it can be vicious. This differentiation between different kinds of fictitious speech and theatricality ultimately serves the purpose of justifying his own use of rhetorical *hypokrisis* ('delivery', *actio* in Latin) as an orator and ecclesiastical official: Eustathios can artfully tell lies with his tongue and body for the purpose of achieving something good while accusing others of hypocrisy. Likewise, Prodromos's use of the dramatic simile of life often functions as a foil to negotiate the role of the intellectual in society. All men are actors but some are more harmful than others. Stratocles is not merely a dishonest charlatan but one who feigns mastery of philosophy by exploiting the flexible nature of rhetoric. We learn that Amarantos and his friends used to trust in the old man 'since he was a terrific speaker',²⁹ and we find him invoking learned topoi and mythological *exempla* of vicious and virtuous women in different ways before and after his decision to get married.³⁰ If Stratocles is the villain, the victim is the young bride, a gardener's daughter named Myrillis who

was forced into marriage by her extreme poverty. When Amarantos reaches this part of the story, the Epicurean Hermocles is gripped by compassion:

By Hercules, Amarantos, what misery! All things are slaves under wealth, everything dominated by gold. Even beauty, free by nature, is sold. For my part, at least, my laughter is turned into tears when I think about how this woman will endure those trembling embraces, suffer his unpleasant kisses, and wretchedly wipe the drool from her bridegroom's face. It would certainly have been better for her to work with her father in his garden; to live in poverty with the hyacinths and go hungry amongst the myrtle berries; to sing along with the nightingales, sleep by the streams and myrtle branches, or eat by the golden manure and recline at the table of silvery dirt.³¹

It is wealth – the unnatural human veneration of metals and stones caused by ignorance – that alienates us from natural goodness and beauty, driving us to agony and distortion. The value attached to wealth by men is also singled out as the most destructive effect of the theatrical illusion of earthly life in Prodromos's aforementioned poem and treatise on Providence. In fact, the poor young bride turns out to be an instance of authorial self-projection. The statement that Myrillis ought to have 'remained hungry amongst her myrtle' (μετὰ τῶν μύρτων πεινᾶν) is a verbal allusion to Prodromos's plea at the end of his treatise that he himself might remain hungry among his books (ἔα μετὰ τῶν βιβλίων πεινᾶν).³² The life of the writer is analogous to that of the gardener, privileged but dangerous, exceedingly rich in beauty but poor in silver and gold, which might cause him to give it all up. Further elucidation of this problem can be gained from yet another Prodromic text, the essay *Refutation of the Proverb 'Poverty acquires Wisdom'*.³³ In this piece, he stresses that excessive poverty is just as great an obstacle to gaining wisdom as excessive wealth:

However, since nature has assigned this body (σκήνος) to us, which has need of many things leading to evil, I fear that he who pursues the branches of learning equipped with utter poverty will end up destroying his own life before he attains wisdom.³⁴

The word for the body in this passage, σκήνος, the tabernacle that covers the soul (cf. LSJ s.v. σκήνος II), also alludes to the theatrical scene (σκηνή) and the dramatic simile of life. All of these reflections seem to amount to a rather conventional recommendation of the Golden mean: human life is a convoluted illusion, but we must play along to some extent. The intellectual knows that gold and precious stones are mere physical substances and should not worship them; yet, if he rejects their arbitrary value altogether, he will never afford the basic means to survive and buy books, thereby losing every possibility of acquiring the wisdom he seeks. In another dialogue, *Sale of Poetic and Political Lives*, Prodromos emphasises that Homer chose to live according to the mind and not the senses; hence, he died a lonely and blind old man, lacking a guide to prevent his accidental death

as reported in ancient biographies.³⁵ This rationale is connected to an argumentative strategy often found in Prodromos's works directed to patrons, obviously designed as to justify his economic dependence on the aristocracy while escaping the stigma of venality. In his encomia, the poet does not beg for much but only enough to survive so that he can carry on celebrating his benefactor.³⁶ Within Amarantos's story, an analogous position is taken by the intellectuals associated with Stratocles. As previously mentioned, Chaeremon 'acted the role of a man in grief' when he believed that Stratocles was dying, but when he arrives to the house, he changes his mask and pleases his patron, providing him with flattering epithets in the document that he is contracted to write.³⁷ The other learned banqueters at the wedding also realise that they are participating in a farce and that Stratocles has been a buffoon all along. However, they play along nonetheless, ridiculing this jester amongst themselves,³⁸ partaking of the wine and food and even praising Stratocles in panegyric poems.³⁹

The negative example is the pitiful Myrillis, who succumbs to poverty and abandons the riches of her garden for the false beauty of a repugnant bridegroom. I would suggest that we could read several ethopoetic moments in Prodromos's oeuvre, such as his *Verses of Complaint against the Devaluation of Learning* and the ptochoprodromic poor scholar's lament (no. 3 Eideneier), as psychological explorations of this desperate state of mind. In these texts, the speaker often envies the more conformable life of lowly artisans and shopkeepers who can at least consume the goods in which they trade.⁴⁰ The writer and intellectual – the merchant who trades in immaterial *logoi* – on the other hand, is further alienated from nature, since he sells a product lacking in direct use value. Worst-case scenario, he can be pressured by poverty to surrender, bid farewell to the theatres of Constantinople,⁴¹ curse his education, unprofitable books and inedible papers,⁴² leave his garden of spiritual delights and indulge in cheap and shallow but lucrative performances instead.⁴³

The flower that never withers

That being so, what is Amarantos's point when he communicates to these three interlocutors that appearances cannot be trusted? Is he simply accusing the Democriteans Diphantos and Philolaos of shortsightedness and lending support to Hermocles's anti-materialist position? If this were the case, Hermocles rather than Amarantos would be the eponymic hero of this dialogue. The difference between their two positions lies in the approach to hedonism. In this context, it is necessary to quote two poems in Prodromos's cycle of five epigrams *On a Garden*:

You see, beholder, the grace of the plot.
Lean down. It is allowed to touch the plants!
Behold, reap the lilies, but with moderation.
Behold, gather the green shoots, but with restraint.
The water, behold, drink it, but not to satiety.
As in a painting, behold yourself.

You flourish and wither – so do the lilies,
 you thrive and die – so do the green shoots,
 you flow and vanish – so do the streams.
 If you, mortal, behold the garden according to my instructions,
 you will not only, I know it, fill your heart with joy
 but earn spiritual salvation too.⁴⁴

Mortal, reap the fruits here and eat!
 For without danger you may reap and eat,
 once you have driven gluttony far away.
 Cut off the hyacinth, pluck the lily,
 reap the myrtle, partake of the balsamon,
 not to become soft in your heart because of them,
 but to reap their mystical fragrance,
 knowing by his creations the Lord Creator.⁴⁵

The garden can serve as a source of mystical knowledge about human life and God; but it must be enjoyed as in a painting; smelled, contemplated, interpreted and allegorised, but never fully consumed. It is in this respect that Amarantos is superior to his interlocutors. Diophantos and Philolaos are fundamentally fooled by the theatre of life and fall into a materialist and atheist worldview. Hermocles, on the other hand, loses himself in the Garden of Epicurus and arrives late to the meeting with his two Democritean friends. When Philolaos playfully suggests that the garden has committed an act of violence against Hermocles when kidnapping him with its sensual delights,⁴⁶ there is a dash of truth to this joke. Within Amarantos's story, Myrillis is overpowered by poverty and forced to leave the natural beauty of the garden, whereas Stratocles represents two equally imprudent and feigned approaches to erotic pleasure: first denouncing it completely throughout his life, but then indulging in it without any restraint whatsoever. Admittedly, Amarantos also indulges in pleasure, but the pleasure of storytelling; he temporarily suspends the fruitless philosophical quarrelling and tells a story that inspires in his audience laughter and tears about human existence. He invites them to contemplate and enjoy the tragic and comic theatre of life without fully participating in the corrupting illusion. Philolaos's words that constitute the sudden and seemingly open-ended finale of the dialogue are not just a casual compliment but they spell out the main conclusion of the whole text: 'Great gods, be it that such banquets never leave our lives as long as the good Amarantos takes part in them, so that he may enjoy their delights with his eyes, and convey their delights to us through his stories'.⁴⁷ At the end of the day, the young men prefer Amarantos's banquet of words to others. This is why the main character bears the name *Amarantos*, meaning a flower that never withers. The ideal garden is the one gazed at in a painting, one that can only be observed but never consumed. The same idea is also present in Lucian's description of a frescoed dining hall, praising its walls for presenting the eye with an eternal spring where 'the meadow is one that never withers (*amarantos*) and the flower is immortal'.⁴⁸ It is obviously implied that the

same holds true of Lucian's own verbal description. Likewise, the ideal banquet is one described by a storyteller, which the audience can take part in but never devour.

Returning to Leopardi, the materialist losers in Prodromos's dialogue would clearly have been winners had they appeared in the *Operette Morali* instead, backed up by the ever-triumphant but cruel stepmother Nature. But although Leopardi and Prodromos held diametrically opposed views in this central aspect, both chose to converse with Lucian in order to access the power of tragicomic storytelling to help them cope with painful aspects of human existence. Through Democritus's laughter and Heraclitus's tears, Amarantos's narrative is presented as the only sensible way of dealing with the convoluted theatre of life: through visual and verbal representation.

Notes

- * This research was conducted with support from Åke Wibergs Stiftelse. I am grateful to Ingela Nilsson and Przemysław Marciniak for discussions about Prodromos, to Nikos Zagklas (Vienna) for sending me his dissertation, to Charis Messis (Paris) for reading and commenting on the paper, and to Stiftelsen Gihls fond (The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities) for enabling me to examine Prodromos manuscripts in Rome.
- 1 See Timpanaro, 'Pessimistic Materialism'.
- 2 Cf. Magdalino and Macrides, 'Fourth Kingdom', 152: 'the fictional antique setting serves as a notional laboratory in which Nature, Fate and Fortune can be studied in isolation from *real* heavenly or earthly authority'.
- 3 Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 1.10–11, ed. Migliorini: ἀτὰρ ἐγὼ τὴν ἀμάραν ἔτι περίεμι καὶ τοῦ ναρκίσσου θιγγάνω καὶ τοῦ ὑακίνθου τρυγῶ.
- 4 Ibid., 3.15–16: τὸν ἐκείνου γέλων εἰ οἶόν τε ἦν χρῆσθαι μοι ἐξητησάμην, ὥς ἂν διὰ βίου τοὺς νόμους καὶ τὰ κενὰ καὶ τὰς ἀτόμους γελῶμι.
- 5 Migliorini, 'Amaranto', 205: 'una cornice sbilanciata, ampia in apertura, sbrigativa in chiusura [...]'.
 6 Ibid., 208: 'Si potrebbe cercare sotto tale patina classicheggiante di Prodromo il biasimo contro l'incoerenza di certi suoi contemporanei filosofi-teologi, paragonabili a Stratocle, intransigente in teoria, ma lassista alla prima occasione buona; ma a voler identificare il contemporaneo a cui Prodromo allude, non riuscirei a fare nomi'.
- 7 Migliorini, 'Scritti satirici', xxvii.
- 8 Migliorini's emendation (αὐτότατος for αὐτόματος) is not implausible, but the word seems to allude to the doctrine of automatism so fundamental to this dialogue, as well as to the famous proverb 'good people go of their own accord to the banquets of good people'. See especially Plato, *Symposium*, 174b. Of course, Amarantos does not arrive of his own accord but through the author's providential care.
- 9 Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 3.17–4.6, ed. Migliorini (modified):

ΔΙΟΦΑΝΤΟΣ

καὶ μὴν, εἰ μὴ τὰ Δημοκρίτου γελᾶν ἐπὶ Δημοκρίτῳ πεπαύσῃ, οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν οἰμῶξῃ τὰ Ἡρακλείτου ἐπὶ σαντῶ· τὰ γὰρ Δημοκρίτου ἐλέγξειν ἐπαγγελάμενος, εἶτα τὴν μὲν ἐπαγγελλίαν κατενωτίσω, ὅλας δὲ σκωμμάτων νιφάδας τοῦ φιλοσόφου κατεχαλάζωσας.

ΕΡΜΟΚΛΗΣ [*scripsi* :

Φιλόλαος V] ἄλλ' εἰ μὴ πάννυ μέλλοιτε χαλεπαίνειν, εὖ μάλα ραδίως οἶμαι πείσειν ὑμᾶς [Migliorini: ἡμᾶς V] τὰ Ἐπικούρου πρεσβεύειν, παρέντας Δημόκριτον.

- ΦΦΛΛΑΟΣ: [scripsi : Ἑρμόκλης V] οὐδ' ἂν ὅλους Ἄθως, ὃ λῶστε, τῆς κορυφῆς μοι καταλαξεύοις.
- ΕΡΜΟΚΛΗΣ: [scripsi : Φιλόλαος V] τεράστιε Ζεῦ, οὗτος δὲ τίς ὁ σπουδῇ προσίων ὡς ἡμᾶς; Οὐχ ὁ Ἀθηναῖος Ἀμάραντος;
- ΦΦΛΛΑΟΣ: [addidi : Αὐτόματος V : αὐτόματος Migliorini] ὃ φίλοι Μοῖραι, καὶ ἡμῖν ἐκτέον τοῦ λόγου ὑπὸ τηλικούτῳ διαιτητῇ. Χαῖρε, ὃ λῶστε Ἀμάραντε, καὶ ὅπως ἐμοὶ καὶ τουτῷ Ἑρμοκλεῖ τὰς περὶ φυσικῶν ἀρχῶν διαλύσεις ἀμφισβητήσεις; Δημοκρίτου δέ με πάλαι μαθὼν ἔχεις καὶ Ἐπικούρου τὸν Ἑρμοκλέα; my trans.

- 10 See Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 3.9; *Sale of Lives*, 127.110; 127.111; 131.210; 132.256.
- 11 See, e.g. the *sebastokrator* Isaac Komnenos's extracts from Proklos Diadochos's works on Providence in Isaac, *Trois études sur la providence*.
- 12 Cf. Nilsson, 'Poets and Teachers in the Underworld'.
- 13 Arethas, *Scholium on Lucian, Zeus Rants*, 47, ed. Rabe, 78.17–82.19. For translation and discussion see Russo, *Contestazione e conservazione*, 19–32.
- 14 Cf. John Tzetzes, *Iambic Verses*, vv. 227–56 with Tzetzes's own scholia.
- 15 Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 7.13–14: ὡς γυναῖκες δραμάτων τε καὶ ποιημάτων τὸν βίον ἐνέπλησαν
- 16 Ibid., 8.7–8: ἀλλ' ἡ χθὲς, ὃ φιλότης, τὸ τε δρᾶμα ὑφείλετο καὶ περιείλετο τὴν σκηνὴν καὶ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐξεπόμευσεν.
- 17 Ibid., 9.6–7: κἀντεῦθεν ὡς παρὰ τεθνηζόμενον ἀπίων τὸν ἀνιώμενον ὑπεκρίνετο.
- 18 Ibid., 10.5–14: ἡ παρεὶα δὲ τοῖς μὲν ἐξεστηκόσι τῆς ῥυτίδος καὶ τοῖς κυρτώμασι χλωρῷ βαπτομένη τῷ φύκει, ταῖς δὲ εἰσοχαῖς καὶ κοιλίαις τῆς ἀρχαίας ὄχρας τὸ πλεόν ἐναποσώζουσα, ἅτε τῷ συμμεμυκότι τῶν οἰδημάτων μὴ καταδύναι πρὸς τὸ κοῦλον τῆς βαφῆς ὅλης συγχωρουμένης, παγγέλοιόν τινα μίξιν ἀπετέλει ὠχροκοκκίνου. ἐνούλιστο δὲ ἡ κόμη καὶ ἐπυρρία· τὸ πλεόν δὲ τοῦ γενείου ξυρῷ πρὸς τὸ περιφερὲς περιήρητο καὶ ἡ κόρη κόχλω διεμελαίνετο, τοῦτό γε οὐκ αἴσιον συλλογισαμένου τοῦ φιλοσόφου· μέλανος γὰρ ἐκείθεν τοῦ τῆς λήμης ὕγρου καταρρέοντος, οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν τὸ σόφισμα ἐξελήλεγκτο; my trans.
- 19 Eustathios of Thessalonike, *On Hypokrisis*, 36, ed. Tafel, 97.39–65.
- 20 See Gounarides, 'Ἡ εἰκόνα τῶν Λατίνων', 162–6.
- 21 Anonymous, *The Haplessly Married Girl*.
- 22 *On Those who Condemn Providence because of Poverty*, 1295b–1296a: ἐώρακας γάρ, εἰπέ μοι, πρεσβύτην ἄνθρωπον, Κρονικὸν τὴν ἡλικίαν, ρικνὸν τὴν ἀναβολήν, τὴν Πυθαγόρειον ὄχραν ἐν τοῖς προσώποις προφαίνοντα, καὶ νάρθακι καμπύλῳ κατὰ τὸν Σειληρόν ἐρειδόμενον; τί ποτε εἶπες ἂν περὶ τούτου; οὐχ' ὡς θεοπρεπὲς οὗτος ἀνὴρ; οὐχ' ὡς ἱερός; οὐχ' ὡς ἀπρονόητα πάντα, μὴ τοιούτων πλουτούντων; εὖ οἶδ' ὅτι καὶ πλείω. ἀλλ' ἐγὼ τὸν ἀναγεγραμμένον ἐώρακα πολλοῦ δέοντα ἱερὸν εἶναι. συλῶντα γὰρ αὐτὸν τὰς κατοικιδίους τῶν ὀρνίθων αἰσθόμενος, ἦν μὲν τῆς χειρὸς ἀφειλόμην, ἦν δὲ τοῦ κόλπου ἐξήγαγον, ὅρῳ ὡς ὑποκρίσει ζῶμεν ἄνθρωποι τὰ πολλὰ, καὶ πλανώμεθα περὶ τὸν ὄνον τῇ λεοντικῇ καὶ τῇ νυμφικῇ στολῇ περὶ τὴν γαλήν. [. . .] οὕτω σκηνὴ βαθεῖα περὶ ἡμᾶς, καὶ παίζομεν ἑαυτοὺς καὶ παιζόμεθα; my trans. Cf. also Prodromos's letter edited by Op de Coul, 'Deux inédits', 179.8–16.
- 23 See Puchner, 'Geschichte der antiken Theaterterminologie', 101–4 for a great number of examples, and Kokolakis, *Dramatic Simile of Life*.
- 24 Theodore Prodromos: *The Ignorant, or the Self-Proclaimed Grammarian*.
- 25 Theodore Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, 3.73–5, 6.180. 280; cf. Agapitos, 'Narrative, Rhetoric, and "Drama" Rediscovered', 156.
- 26 *Scholium on Zeus Rants*, 41, ed. Rabe, 75.26–76.2.
- 27 Prodromos, *On Those Who Condemn Providence because of Poverty*, 1295a–b: σὲ δὲ ἀλλὰ τῶν πραγμάτων ἴσως ἢ ἀνισότης ἀνήνασθαι τὴν Πρόνοιαν ἔπεισε; Καὶ μὴν διατοῦτο μᾶλλον εἰσάγειν ἔχρην τὴν Πρόνοιαν· ὡς γὰρ οὐκ ἂν ποτε ἐπὶ μουσικῆς ῥυθμὸς συσταίη καὶ μέλος, βαρέων μόνως ὄντων ἢ ὀξέων τῶν φθόγγων ἀπάντων,

- ἀλλὰ τῇ παραπλοκῇ τῶν ἀνισοτόνων ἡ ἀρμονία γεννᾶσθαι εἴωθεν, οὕτω καὶ ὁ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἅπας βίος ταῖς ἀνισότησι τῶν πραγμάτων ὑπὸ τῆς Προνοίας μουσικῶς κατερρυθμίστα. ἀλλὰ τούτων ἡμῖν [reading of V, 44r; ed. has ὑμῖν] αἰτία ἡ ἄγνοια, ἣν δεινὸν εἶναι καὶ ὁ Σῦρος εἶρηκε ρήτωρ, τοῦτο γε μόνον οὐχὶ ψευσάμενος· οἷς γὰρ οὐκ ἀναπτῆναι πρὸς αἰθέρα δυνάμεθα καὶ τὰς αἰτίας αὐτοπτῆσαι καθαρῶς καὶ τοὺς λόγους δι' ὧν τὸ πᾶν ἡ Πρόνοια τάττει σοφῶς καὶ ἐπιστημονικῶς, τούτοις ἀταξίαν τοῦ παντὸς καταψηφίζόμεθα, καίτοι συνιέναι ἐχρῆν ὥς τοὺς προνοητικούς λόγους γνῶναι ἀμήχανον τῷ μὴδὲ ἀνθρωπίνῃ αἰσθημένῳ τὰ πολλὰ διανοίας.
- 28 See, e.g. Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I*, 340–2; Mullett, 'Rhetoric, Theory and the Imperative of Performance', 152; Bourbouhakis, 'The End of ἐπίδειξις', 218.
- 29 Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 8.3.
- 30 Ibid., 7.9–14; 18.6–11.
- 31 Ibid., 13.4–14: 'Ἡράκλεις, Ἀμάραντε, τοῦ κακοῦ. πάντα δουλεύει τῷ πλούτῳ, πάντα ὑπέζευκται τῷ χρυσῷ. Πέπραται καὶ κάλλος φύσει ἐλεύθερον. ὥς ἐμοὶ γε εἰς δάκρυον ἀντιπεριῆλθεν ὁ γέλως ἐνθυμηθέντι πῶς μὲν ἀνέξεται τῶν τρομαλέων ἐκείνων περιπλοκῶν ἡ γυνή, πῶς δὲ τὰς ἀηδεῖς τῶν χειλέων ἐνέγκῃ ἀντεμπλοκάς καὶ κορυζῶντα τὸν νυμφίον ἡ ταλαίπωρος ἀπομύξει. ὥς ἄρα κρεῖττον ἦν αὐτῇ, τῷ πατρὶ τὸν κῆπον συμπονουμένη, μετὰ τῶν ὑακίνθων πένεσθαι καὶ μετὰ τῶν μύρτων πεινᾶν καὶ ταῖς ἀηδόσι συνάδειν καὶ ὑπὸ ταῖς ῥοαῖς καὶ ταῖς μυρίναις ὑπνοῦν ἢ μετὰ τῆς χρυσέας κόπρου δειπνεῖν καὶ τῷ ἀργυρῷ βορβόρῳ συγκατακλίνεσθαι; my trans.
- 32 Theodore Prodromos, *On Those Who Condemn Providence*, 1300a.
- 33 For this proverb, see Stobaeus, 4.32.7 = Euripides, frag. 641, ed. Kannicht.
- 34 Theodore Prodromos, *Refutation of the Proverb*, 1320a: ἐπεὶ δὲ σκῆνος τοῦτο πολλῶν ἐπιδεῖς πρὸς κακοῦ περιήρμωσεν ἡμῖν ἡ φύσις, δέδοικα μὴ ὁ μετὰ πενίας ἀπάντων τοῖς μαθήμασι φθάσῃ πρὶν ἢ λαχεῖν τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ που τὴν ψυχὴν ἐναπορρηγνύς; my trans.
- 35 Theodore Prodromos, *Sale of Poetical and Political Lives*, 128.54–78. See Cullhed, 'Blind Bard and "I"', 11–19.
- 36 See, e.g. *Historical Poems*, 38.116–18; cf. Alexiou, 'Ploys of Performance', 94–5.
- 37 Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 12.1–17
- 38 Ibid., 14–15.
- 39 Ibid., 16.
- 40 See Alexiou, 'Poverty of Écriture'.
- 41 Theodore Prodromos, *Historical Poems*, 79.
- 42 *Ptochoprodromika*, 3, ed. Eideneier.
- 43 Theodore Prodromos, *Verses of Complaint Against the Devaluation of Learning*.
- 44 Theodore Prodromos, *On a Garden*, 1, ed. Zagklas: ὀρᾶς, θεατά, τοῦ φυτῶνος τὴν χάριν, | πρόκυψον. ἄψαι τῶν φυτῶν οὐδεὶς φθόνος. | ἰδοὺ κρίνον τρύγησον, ἀλλὰ σωφρόνως, | ἰδοὺ χλόην τρύγησον, ἀλλὰ μετρίως, | ὕδωρ ἰδοὺ ρόφησον, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰς κόρον. | ὥς ἐν τύποις δὲ καὶ σεαυτὸν μοι βλέπε. | ἀνθεῖς, ἀπανθεῖς, τοῦτο δὴ καὶ τοῦ κρίνου· | θάλλεις, μαραίνῃ, τοῦτο δὴ καὶ τῆς χλόης· | ῥέεις, παρέρχῃ, τοῦτο καὶ τῶν ὕδατων. | ἄν, ὥς ἔφην, ἄνθρωπε, τὸν κῆπον βλέπῃς, | πλήσεις μὲν, οἶδα, καὶ χαρὰς τὴν καρδίαν, | καὶ ψυχικὴν δὲ κερδανεῖς σωτηρίαν; my trans.
- 45 Theodore Prodromos, *On a Garden*, 1, ed. Zagklas: ἄνθρωπε, δεῦρο καὶ τρύγησον καὶ φάγε· | ἀκινδύνως γὰρ καὶ τρυγήσεις καὶ φάγῃς, | μόνον τὸ λίχνον ἐκδιώξας μακρόθεν. | τὸν ὑακίνθον κεῖρε, τοῦ κρίνου δρέπου, | τρύγα τὸ μύρτον, λαμβάνου τοῦ βαλσάμου, | οὐχ ὥς δι' αὐτῶν θηλυεῖς τὴν καρδίαν, | ἀλλ' ὥς τρυγῆσῃς μυστικὴν εὐωδίαν, | τοῖς κτίσμασι γνοὺς τὸν κτίσαντα δεσπότην; my trans.
- 46 Theodore Prodromos, *Amarantos*, 1.6–10.
- 47 Ibid., 19.24–26: ἀλλὰ μὴ ἐπιλείποιέν ποτε, ὦ θεοί, τὸν βίον τοιαῦτα συμπόσια, Ἀμαράντου συμποσιάζοντος τοῦ καλοῦ, ὥς ἂν καὶ αὐτὸς ὀφθαλμοῖς τρυφῶν καὶ ἡμῖν διακομίζοι ταῖς ἀφηγήσεσι τὴν τρυφήν.
- 48 Lucian, *On the House*, 9. For similar uses referring to writing or *grammatikē* in Prodromos's context, see Makrembolites, *Hysmine et Hysminias*, 11.22 and the anonymous *Anacharsis or Ananias*, 52.

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12 ‘Let us not obstruct the possible’

Dialoguing in medieval Georgia

Nikoloz Aleksidze

It has become almost a cliché to write about medieval Georgia as a crossroad of civilisations, religions and religious denominations. In spite of the rather modest space that the Caucasus occupied in mediaeval Eurasia, this evaluation is certainly true, as throughout its history, the Caucasian region has indeed experienced extreme cultural diversity. This is particularly true of literary genres and techniques that were applied and mastered throughout late antiquity and particularly in the Middle Ages, enriching Georgian literature with classical forms, Byzantine rhetoric and Arabic, Persian and Ottoman literary styles, genres and techniques.

Due to this exceptional position, mediaeval Georgian intellectuals were exposed to both the classical tradition of dialoguing and the art of late antique and mediaeval Byzantine theological disputation. Later, with the expansion of the Muslim cultural world, the widely spread *munāẓarā*, ‘a literary genre for the struggle of precedence’,¹ accessed Georgian writing first through Arabic speaking communities and later from Iran, when Persian literary styles were in vogue, particularly in eastern Georgia.² After the collapse of the Byzantine empire and the occupation of eastern Georgia by the Persian Safavids, dialogues became not merely a common but a predominant genre of pre-modern Georgian literature. The technique of *munāẓarā* permeated all genres, whether theological discourses, epic poetry, parables, fairy tales or lyric poetry. The Georgian late Middle Ages and early modernity were indeed a period of dialogue between classical forms and modernity,³ between the East and the West, Christianity and Islam, all this often expressed in dialogic versification.⁴

The growing popularity of the dialogic format was manifested in Georgian vocabulary, which preserved a number of terms standing for various types, aspects and shades of dialogue, borrowed from Greek, Arabic, Persian and Turkish. Apart from the Greek calque *dialoghi*, which usually denoted this specific literary form of Byzantine literature, *sit’quisgeba* was used mostly in the context of theological disputations. Later, the Arabic/Persian *munāẓarā*, known in Georgian as *gabaaseba*, acquired particular popularity as a literary style, occupying the minds of the Georgian poets up until the eighteenth century.⁵ The Arabic word *mokamat* resonated in mediaeval and contemporary Georgian as a term specifically used for ‘dispute’ (*k’amati*). Other terms particularly widely used in Middle Georgian language were *maslaati*, *musaipi* and others rendering a rather relaxed

conversation on frivolous matters. The rise of secular literature in the tenth century had a tremendous impact on the way in which dialogue, as a literary and rhetorical technique, was perceived and elaborated in mediaeval Georgia. Not coincidentally, none of the above-listed words, apart from *sit'q'uisgeba*, have been used in a theological or ecclesiastical context and are all attested exclusively in secular discourse, betraying dialogue's predominantly secular nature in mediaeval Georgian writing.

'Monologic' dialogues: martyrologies

Dialogue, as a primitive form of conversation/questions and answers, was a common literary tool in early mediaeval Georgian corpus. Several translated homilies and hymns have survived, composed in a dialogic form and widely known in the Christian world.⁶ Original and translated Lives of Saints and martyrologies often culminated in a highly ritualised exchange of arguments between the saint and the judge. Whether this was the rather complex disputation between St Eustathius of Mcxeta (sixth century) and the Persian *marzpan* of Iberia over the divinity of fire,⁷ or earlier between Queen Šušanik' and her husband Varsken (fifth century) over the primacy of the former's conjugal responsibilities as opposed to her debt to Christ, an impasse overtly Antigonean in nature – all these disputes can only mechanically be labelled as a dialogue, as there exist no two voices, no actual contest, but instead a ritualised performance of two sealed off perspectives, where water would always extinguish fire and the martyr would always die by her opponent's hand.

Only much later do proper theological dialogues appear, such as the eleventh-century compendium *Dogmatikon*, compiled by Arseni of Iq'alto. The *Dogmatikon* contains a wide selection of theological dialogues, out of which the most noteworthy are Muslim-Christian dialogues attributed (often wrongly) to Theodore Abu-Qurrah (ninth century), a very popular authority in mediaeval Georgia.⁸ These dialogues served educational purposes and were utilised in school curricula for rhetorical training, particularly at Gelati 'Academy'.

In the twelfth century, the popularity of such martyrological disputations even prompted the philosopher Ephrem Mcire to elaborate a punctuation system for distinguishing and identifying various voices and addressees in literary dialogues. Ephrem was concerned with a correct performative rendering of the 'code-switching' that occurred within the narrative with the change of the martyr's addressee. Hence, he prescribed that 'when the martyr is talking to the judge and suddenly he alters his voice and addresses God, then six dots are used, not to end the passage but to allow the readers to change their own voice too'.⁹

Embedded dialogical elements

Beginning from the tenth century, Georgian literature became truly obsessed with dialoguing, particularly when Georgians were exposed to non-Christian literary trends and aesthetics, both Arabic (especially at monasteries in the Holy Land,

such as St Saba's Lavra) or Persian in Georgia proper. The emerging Georgian secular literature immediately adopted dialogue as the principal literary technique, mostly through Arabic and Persian obsession with dialogic eloquence. From the eleventh century and with the sophistication of Georgia's royal court, these contacts resulted in a dramatic thriving of Georgian writing, particularly of court and epic literature, in both verse and prose. Persian epic poetry was rendered in Georgian, resulting in almost independent redactions of the original texts.¹⁰ It was through the rise of the secular literature that for the first time dialogue as a self-sufficient value emerged.

The translation and adaptation of the *Edifying Tale of Bilauhar and Budasaph* had a vast impact on the formation of secular Georgian writing, resulting in the popular tale *Balavariani* (known in other versions as the *Wisdom of Balahvar*). The romance was in the early eleventh century translated into Greek, and as Rayfield eloquently described, 'affected spiritual literature as deeply as it was to influence Georgia's embryonic secular literature'.¹¹ *Balavariani* introduced the ritualised performance of the disputes in the royal presence, where the king acts as a more-or-less independent arbiter. The entire text, which can only loosely be called hagiographic, is composed of an almost uninterrupted dialogue between King Abenes, his son Iodasap or the sage Balahvar. The parables, subplots and other narrative techniques that permeate the romance are all integrated into the incessant dialogue.¹² The influence that this genre, as exemplified in *Balavariani*, exercised upon late mediaeval Georgian literature was indeed tremendous. In the seventeenth century, Sulxan-Saba Orbeliani composed the *Wisdom of a Lie*, a mirror for the princes, which itself constituted a hidden dialogue with the original *Wisdom of Balahvar*.¹³

One of the many novelties that the *Balavariani* has introduced is the entirely different way the dialogues function compared to the traditional lives of the saints, whether translated or original, by fusing epic and theological traditions of literary dialogues. Apart from a constant and implicit polemic between two divergent philosophical worldviews of substantiality versus insubstantiality of the world, the narrative is also entirely constructed of dialogues. The speeches of various protagonists, far from being a sealed off monologue, dialogise with each other and the debate becomes a source for reconciliation and pacification. Thus, every time Prince Iodasap initiates a stern argument with his uncompromising father, the dispute ends with the king's pacifying rather than reaching an impasse, until Iodasap himself becomes king and, like his father, presides over similar disputations. For example, a disputation organised by King Abenes was to finally establish the true religion and terminate the issue – Christianity or idolatry. The debate was staged in a very traditional *munāzarā* form and was presided by the king, who declared severe punishment on the losing side, whether Christian or not. But unlike other hagiographic debates, which in most cases culminate with a *deus ex machina* solution¹⁴ or with a bitter *might is right*, such a terminus is extremely rare in the *Balavariani*, as both youthful Iodasap and his father Abenes may be and are convinced by rational discourse and elaborate discussions.

The tale of *Vis and Ramin* rendered in verse by Gurgānī in the mid eleventh century, was almost immediately, in the early twelfth century, translated to Georgian and widely disseminated as the *Visramiani*.¹⁵ The entire epic, with a complex plot, is built upon almost incessant conversations and disputations, particularly between the two lovers Vis and Ramin, and strongly determined how literary dialogues were constructed in the rising secular Georgian literature. Apart from constant dialoguing and verbal competition, over seventeen chapters of the epic are dedicated to the culminating disputation between the protagonists Vis and Ramin.¹⁶

The Persian models, the *Vis and Ramin* or Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* (tenth century), had a tremendous impact on Georgian poetic tradition. The *Vepxist'q'aosani* (the Knight in the Panther's Skin), attributed to Rustaveli (twelfth century), tried to unite the Persian poetic tradition with Classical and Christian perspectives by declaring the art of conversation as one of the cardinal virtues of a hero.¹⁷ With Rustaveli and the rise of Georgian neo-Platonic school, the art of dialoguing became associated with rationality and acted as a manifestation of *philia*, through which the protagonists contemplated the 'First (One) Love'.

The *Vepxist'q'aosani* opens with a discussion between the main hero, General Avtandil, King Rost'evan and the wise *vizier*, not coincidentally named Sograt' [Socrates]. The three engaged in a light-hearted conversation on a particularly popular *munāzarā* theme of old age and youth, of life and death and similar matters.¹⁸ The ending of most debates, however ardent, as the ultimate function of a *munāzarā* prescribed, was not to obtain victory but to discover a compromise. Thus, in spite of her initial wrath, Princess Nest'an is pacified by general T'ariel's sweet and lengthy conversation. As T'ariel himself later recalled: 'The wrathful, enraged one became tender to me; either the sun was on earth or the full-faced moon; she set me near her, she caressed me, hitherto unworthy of this, she conversed with me; thus she extinguished the fire kindled in me'.¹⁹ The following enigmatic passage subtly hints at the 'trophy' that Avtandil received from his beloved Princess Tinatin for his conversational prowess. The lengthy conversation between the two thus ends: 'The sweet knight in a sweet Georgian returned good for good, spoke to the sun like a pleasant instructor to a pupil. The maiden gave him a pearl – she fulfilled his desire. May God similarly fulfil all his future joys'.²⁰

The art of dialoguing, as a rational capacity, acquired an even deeper meaning in the poem. Rustaveli distinguishes between two moving impulses that propel the plot: the rational or discursive, embodied by the Arab general Avtandil and his fiancée Princess Tinatin, contrasting with the impulsive and irrational personified by the Hindu T'ariel and his beloved Nest'an, whose erratic character triggered off the poem's central conflict. Indeed, these four heroes and two houses are contrasted by their ability to conduct a rational discussion in the most extreme circumstances. Where the Hindu couple fails, Avtandil, the embodiment of discursive rationality, manages to pave his way through all obstacles by merely conversing. Whomever he meets, he mesmerises with this particular talent, hence his epithet 'sweet Knight and sweet Georgian'. 'The joy of this world', as Rustaveli praises

him, saves his friend, the fallen panther-slaying T'ariel, by removing him from the abyss of despair and melancholy through eloquent argumentation and logical reasoning. As a result, '[T'ariel] obeyed. Avtandil and the *Amirbar* [T'ariel] set out. I cannot achieve the praise of their worth: teeth like pearls, lips cleft roses. The sweetly discoursing tongue lures forth the serpent from its lair'.²¹

Here we run into the principal difference between Gurgānī, Rustaveli's most candid inspiration and Rustaveli himself over the philosophical function of dialogue. On this subject, the *Vepxist'qaosani* constitutes in itself a hidden polemic with the *Vis and Ramin*. When Ramin finally arrives to see Vis, the latter encounters her lover 'like an angry lion', mirrored by the culminating meeting between T'ariel and Nest'an, where the latter awaited the knight as 'a stern panther lying on a cliff'. Thus, essentially a similar conversation is initiated between the two, although compared to the shorter dialogue between T'ariel and Nest'an, the one between Ramin and Vis lasts throughout seventeen chapters. Accusations of betrayal are followed by wrath of Ramin, argument by a counter-argument, and so on seemingly without a chance for compromise, and as it happens, even the nature and the elements react vehemently to the austere clash of the two lovers. The disputation becomes even more impenetrable – Vis is enraged and Ramin is distressed, uttering words that he should have never said. Eventually, 'the snow of the mountain was not melted by Ramin's converse, nor did the flower fade through that cold'. Ramin only realises what he had done, after Vis is about to leave for good, which makes the knight curse his *goniereba* – i.e. intelligence or rationality.²² In contrast with Rustaveli, the dramatic purpose of the lengthy dispute is to demonstrate the impasse that it has reached and will always reach when Vis and Ramin meet face to face. By taking the rhetorical eloquence to its summit, the author makes it all too clear that Vis and Ramin were never supposed to converse, or to dialogue, as dialogue can only occur between two subjects or rather two voices, whereas Vis and Ramin were never destined to be two and their only possible existence, whether in this world or another, is being one. After the exhausting, impenetrable conversation, abruptly and unexpectedly the following happens:

When dawn showed her banner, they were both afraid of daybreak and exposure, and words failed. Their erring hearts found the road, and the devil of enmity fled back. They took each other's hands and went up to the tower. . . . They lay down exhausted, frozen from the cold, in a skin scented with musk on one couch, they were united like one soul in two bodies. They were just as they had desired. . . . As much as they had wished for union, so much did it please them to be together. They did not separate from each other for a moment from head to foot, nor was there room for a hair to pass between them. Thus were they for a month, so that no one knew what they were doing.²³

The magnetic attraction between the two is destructive, not vivifying, both for the lovers and for the entire world. Here no happy ending can occur, because as

Rustaveli categorises, this is the third sort of love of the second sort of men – the destructive one.²⁴

Conversely, Rustaveli sees love (*mijnuroba*) as a philosophical category, not an impulse. In the opening verses, he sets out rules for lovers by subtly criticising the irrational behaviour of Vis and Ramin.²⁵ Here love, as the primary category, is equal to 'the One'. As a neo-Platonic thinker, Rustaveli believes that lovers are also true lovers of wisdom and the only intercourse that will appeal to them is the rational exploration together. If, however, they are men of the second order, as explicated in the introductory verses, their constant proximity may prove to be overwhelming for them, as it had overwhelmed Vis and Ramin and as all tragedies were unleashed by T'ariel and Nest'an. The very same discursive rationality that allows the heroes of the *Vepxist'q'aosani* to overcome all obstacles lets the philosopher Avtandil step-by-step fix the world that had crumbled due to Nest'an's and T'ariel's hysterical and destructive passion.

Unlike the volatile Hindu couple, the dialogues between Avtandil and Tinatin are always performed between two rational, law-bearing subjects (νόμον ἔχων ἑκάτερος).²⁶ Following Plato's steps, for Rustaveli too, love is a rational exploration, where in Plato's words, through dialogues Avtandil communicates wisdom (εἰς φρόνησιν συμβάλλεσθαι) to Tinatin.²⁷ The sublime manifestation of love is indeed the possibility of a rational discourse and dialogue between the two law-bearing subjects. Thus, Avtandil and Tinatin are lovers of the first order, superior to Vis and Ramin, for their love imitates (*hbazven*) the One, which 'even the sages cannot comprehend'. The earthly lovers are merely capable of imitating or contemplating it, whereas Vis and Ramin's irrational love fails to contemplate the One, thus dooming the two for nonbeing.

Another prose epic, also dated to the twelfth century but probably edited and interpolated multiple times throughout the five subsequent centuries, is the *Amirandarejaniani* – the cycle of novels of the hero Amiran and his companions.²⁸ Similarly to the *Visramiani*, the narrative is entirely embedded with dialogues and disputations. The narrative and sub-narratives are delivered within dialogues mainly between a king and a hero as tales told in the royal presence. Here romance does not play any vital role and the epic is only interested in physical and military prowess of the protagonists. The purpose of extensive antiphonal dialogues was both mnemonic and performative, and the saga was indeed performed at the Georgian royal court similarly to dozens of other heroic epics created throughout late mediaeval and early modern Georgia. Here also, dialogue or dispute functions not as another tool for battle, as in case of theological contests, but is rather aimed at avoiding confrontation and pacifying. Whenever possible, a trial by disputation occurs that precedes a combat and is an attempt to avoid it. But sometimes dialogue does not help, as the opponent lacks the rational capacity needed to engage in a conversation and then one is forced to take arms, as one of the heroes of *Amirandarejaniani* complains: 'A conversion was initiated and he thus said: I myself am saddened, for I did not wish to slay those people, I was talking to them mildly but they were angered, for Arabs are proud people and a soft conversation does not apply to them'.²⁹

'Real' and imagined dialogues

Apart from embedded dialogic elements, we are aware that actual staged disputations may have taken place in Georgia. Several accounts have survived of such debates staged in the presence of a higher authority, a king or a patriarch. Such accounts can be classified in two groups: on the one hand, these are the theological disputations with the Armenians over the Chalcedonian definitions; and, on the other, disputations with the Greeks over the issues of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and rights of the Georgians at the monasteries in Byzantium and the Holy Land.³⁰

In 608, the Armenian Katholikos Abraham (607–615) issued an encyclical letter prescribing Armenians to sever all ties with the Georgians and not even to converse with them apart from the matters of commerce. This event is usually considered as the beginning of a new era in the Armeno-Georgian relations and also in the way the two peoples perceived and communicated with each other. The Schism was preceded by nearly a decade of correspondence and disputations between Armenian and Georgian hierarchs and lay rulers over the Chalcedonian definitions and the allegiance of the Georgian and Armenian Churches.³¹

But the Caucasian Schism did not resonate immediately in Georgian literature, which is surprisingly silent and seemingly disinterested in theological debates until the tenth century. But by the eleventh century, the situation seems to have altered, when the ethnic and religious map of the Southern Caucasus and North-Eastern Anatolia changed drastically. The Armenian kingdoms collapsed and a new Georgian kingdom was created.³² The new political entity that was being created and known as the Kingdom of the Georgians was founded on land occupied by Georgians, Greeks, non-Chalcedonian Armenians and also Chalcedonian Armenians. In the eleventh century, such was the Kingdom of T'ao, ruled by the Georgian Bagratids. From the twelfth century, the entire South Caucasian region was united under the same dynasty presided by Georgian Chalcedonian monarchs.³³ As a result, the highest military and courtly elites were both Georgians and Armenians, Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians. Under these circumstances, the practice of theological debates is more than expected and such debates are indeed recorded several times throughout the two subsequent centuries.

In the tenth century, Armenian Bishop Uxtanēs of Sebasteia produced a history of the *Georgian Severance from the Armenians*, a text that was supposed to clarify the nature of the Georgian dissent, thus codifying the Armenian narrative of the Schism.³⁴ Only slightly later, the Georgian katholikos Arseni of Sapara produced a similar text entitled *On the Separation of the Armenians and Georgians*.³⁵ Despite the similarity in scope and titles, both the addressivity and the 'horizon of expectation' of the two texts vary. While the Armenian treatise intends to seal off the two voices, Armenian and Georgian, by creating a cleavage between the two traditions, remembrances and rhetoric, and by thus forging the image of a Georgian 'subaltern', the narrative by Arseni has an opposite intention and can indeed be called dialogic in its open-endedness. Arseni briefly recounts the ecclesiastical controversies in sixth-to-eighth-century Armenia and voices a radically different perspective, namely that despite their heresy, Armenians as a group still

remain blameless: the divergence of the Armenians is a result of individual decisions of several but not all patriarchs, and the Armenians as a people are therefore not answerable. He refers to the Armenians as 'blameless', thus stressing the fact that only individual authorities were responsible for the Armenian defiance.³⁶ It seems that the text was composed specifically for the ethnic Armenian population of the border regions in an attempt to create an alternative and inclusive narrative of the irreconcilable past. Thus, while recounting Georgian and Armenian history, Arseni uses solely Armenian sources in his attempts to create a dialogic field and avoids the first person – Georgians are not called 'us' but rather 'them', the Armenian apostasy was not their decision but was rather forced on them by external actors and factors.³⁷

But Arseni's attempt to dialogise both Georgian and Armenian voices was not necessarily a predominant tendency, and numerous lives of saints created in the same period would certainly disagree. By the eleventh century, the schism between the two peoples became particularly manifest, with polemical voices heard from both sides. With the exposure to Byzantine radically anti-Armenian polemic, these sentiments, especially among the monastics, grew even more powerful.³⁸ The two traditions were already sufficiently sealed off, theological casuistic was amplified by apocryphal narratives, invectives and falsifications, and a demarcation line was drawn between the two traditions and remembrances of the mythical pre-Schismal 'common' past.³⁹

The council of Art'anuji

The anonymous *Dispute of Ekvtime and Sostene* (eleventh century) recounts how in 1051 King Bagrat IV (1018–72) convened a military council in the fortress of Art'anuji, the centre of the Georgian Kingdom and the very middle of this multiethnic and multireligious land. The participating generals were both Georgians and Armenians, Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian. At a certain point, all strategic discussions were halted for confessional reasons as a certain Armenian monk called Sostene has arrived and was discrediting the Orthodox faith with no one capable of responding. Therefore, King Bagrat IV summoned a Georgian theologian Ekvtime, who had recently arrived from Jerusalem, to counter the Armenian and to establish the truth. Thus, a trial by theological combat was initiated.⁴⁰

This text is indeed the first recorded instance in four centuries, after the encyclical of Katholikos Abraham, that the question was stated: how were the Armenians and Georgians to converse and coexist under a single crown and comprise a single royal court when such a radical difference between their confessions and perceptions of past existed – a question that was reformulated multiple times in the centuries to come.

Before proceeding, we ought to consider the literary setting of the disputation, for this dramatic setting became a model for all subsequent similar debates. The dispute was conducted in a style typical to *munāzarāt*: two disputants were given the floor and the debate was attended by generals and nobility from two sides, ethnic Armenian and ethnic Georgian. The debate was presided over by the king.

The role of the disputers is clear, to prevail or to lose, the role of the attendants is equally understandable – to cheer or to be ashamed. Our interest lies in the role of the king.

As the courtesy of the early theological *munāzarāt* prescribed, the potentially weaker side, from the author's point of view, was granted the privilege of posing the opening questions, which the Armenian monk did. Before embarking upon the core of the discussion, Sostene posed rather provocative questions, hoping to perplex the Georgian monk who, being a man of deserts, lacked proper erudition. Namely, he asked where was he coming from, whom has he met on his way here or what did he have for dinner.⁴¹ Lacking any particular rhetorical strength, these questions simply act as provokers to allow the opponent to stage an immediate and decisive attack. To summarise Ekvtime's eloquent answer, he replied that he comes from Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Rome, bringing with him the faith of the Six Ecumenical Councils, whereas his opponent comes from the 'East', from the seed of Nestorius, Severus and Peter the Fuller.⁴² Thus, in the very opening of the conversation, Ekvtime drew a line of demarcation, a limit between the opponent and himself, which was geographic, cultural, theological and political. Effectively, this was where the dialogue ended and reached an impasse. There was nothing to talk about as the two, as Ekvtime demarcates, the East and the West, shall never meet. What followed instead was a highly ritualised performance, with both sides voicing 'arguments' that were all too well known to both Armenians and Georgians, arguments that were far from being theologically sound, rather abounding of apocryphal stories, invectives and wildly offensive and ungrounded claims.⁴³ This ritualised polemic was far from being a dialogue and was in its essence entirely sealed off and monologic. Here, unlike Katholikos Arseni, Ekvtime narrates the history of *them*, the Armenians, who as a group are to be blamed and marginalised.⁴⁴ As Bakhtin would say, these two voices

know nothing of one another and are not reflected in one another. They are self-enclosed and deaf; they do not hear and do not answer one another. There are not and cannot be any dialogic relationships among them. They neither argue nor agree.⁴⁵

The arguments voiced at Art'anuji were sufficiently distanced from theology, and full of invectives, and were thus well known among Armenians and Georgians. That such polemic encounters were historically common and various apocryphal narratives and invectives were spread throughout the Caucasus is demonstrated by a treatise by the thirteenth-century Armenian intellectual Mxitar Goš's *Letter to the Georgians*, which provides ready answers and counter-arguments for the Armenians to confront the Georgian allegations, acting as a guidebook on how to debate with the Georgians.⁴⁶ Mxit'ar's rhetoric effectively aims to detract the Georgian argument and to demonstrate that the anti-Armenian arguments set forward by the Georgians are in many instances matters of tradition and custom and have nothing to do with the doctrine, in a way reminiscing the rhetoric of the katholikos Arseni's short historical account.⁴⁷

If we return to the debate in Art'anuji, it would not come as a surprise if I were to say that the Georgian monk emerged victorious and the Armenian conceded that 'he was defeated by the Truth itself'.⁴⁸ Prior to the debate, the Armenian had asked for an arrangement that the ashamed loser would walk naked in the crowds. But when the Armenian disputer lost and the Georgian Ekvtime demanded that he be stripped and walked naked, the king refused to let him perform this disgraceful act; indeed, having witnessed Ekvtime's victory, Bagrat' did not express any particular joy and did not seem to be impressed as he ought to have been. Instead, he offered Sostene to leave his monastery and to come to serve in Georgia where he would have been granted an alternative abode. Sostene was saddened and simply replied that he would not be able to leave his monastery due to practical reasons and not necessarily theological. So he went back home in peace.⁴⁹

This brings us to the question of the role that the Georgian king occupied in the real or imagined public disputations that allegedly took place several times between the Armenians and Georgians at the royal court, particularly at the courts of the two great kings, almost equally revered in the Georgian and Armenian traditions, David IV the Builder and Queen Tamar.

The bored king

Less than a century after the alleged events in Art'anuji, another military council brought together generals of Georgian and Armenian faith in the royal presence. This occurred in Tbilisi, the capital city of Georgia, soon after David IV 'the Builder' (1086–1121) had united most of the south Caucasian lands under the Bagrat'ioni crown. Within the same dramatic setting as in Art'anuji, once again a question arose: how shall we, Armenians and Georgians, converse in the king's presence? This shorter dialogue was preserved in the *Life of David* and is more an account of the dispute rather than the conversation itself. The entire setting is sufficiently intriguing, but what is most curious is the outcome of the dialogue:

There gathered once in the presence of the king that perverse nation, a large number of the bishops and abbots of the totally wicked Armenians, who imagined that they themselves had attained the summit of all learning and science. They requested that by his command a council be summoned and a debate and enquiry held about religion. If the Armenians were defeated, they would accept unity of religion and would anathematize their own religion. But if the Armenians were victorious, they would only ask that we no longer call them heretics or anathematise them. Then the King summoned Ioane, the Katholikos of Kartli, the bishops and the hermits, Arseni Iq'altoeli [the author of the *Dogmatikon*] – the translator who knew both the Greek and Georgian languages and who illuminated all the Churches – and other knowledgeable and wise men.⁵⁰

The *Life of David* was soon after its creation translated into Armenian, where this exact passage, the opening of the disputation, sharply contrasts with the Georgian

account: 'David also wished to unite the Armenians and Georgians. So he summoned John, Katholikos of Kartli and Arsenios of Kartli, translator of the Georgian and Greek languages, and Armenian bishops and *vardapets*, and he held a council'.⁵¹

Whereas the Georgian text immediately seals off the antagonising Armenian and Georgian voices, the Armenian translation transforms polemic into a dialogue, thus creating an entirely new image of reality in which David's intention differs radically. After this, for a while, the Armenian and Georgian texts agree: 'They conducted a mutual debate from dawn until the ninth hour, but they were not able to reach a conclusion, because on both sides there were merely a desire for victory and a disputation of vain words. For they entered into impenetrable questions difficult to resolve, which bored⁵² the king'.⁵³

To my knowledge, this is the only instance in the Georgian corpus, and also a very rare instance in Byzantine dialogic literature, where the disputation of the most authoritative theologians, in effect saints, is called vain. The solution to the vanity of these theologians may come as a surprise – the royal boredom. This is also the only instance in Georgian literature where the Georgian king, a person who was canonised almost immediately after his death, did not take sides and was equally bored and annoyed by both contestants. Further, the Georgian version tells:

So David said to them: Fathers, you have tackled certain divine and incomprehensible questions, like philosophers. We, like unlearned men and complete rustics, have not been able to understand anything. This is known to you, that I am far from learning and knowledge, as one raised among campaigns. Therefore I shall propose to you words understandable by the unlearned, simple and common people. After saying this he began to address them in words, which indubitably God put in his mouth. He set out such parables and examples supported by wonderful arguments that were incontrovertible and incontestable, whereby he drowned them like the Egyptians, and closed their mouths and rendered them completely speechless and unable to respond, as once the Great Basil did in Athens. These dissenters he made so terrified and completely powerless that they openly confessed his victory over the debaters: 'O king, we thought you a disciple of your teachers; but, as we see, you are certainly the teacher of teachers, whose claw these supposed teachers of yours cannot attain'. So greatly blaming themselves, they returned in confusion, never again daring to do such a thing.⁵⁴

Comparing disputers, both Armenians and Georgians, to Egyptians is indeed an audacious statement, even more so if we consider how revered the participants were. Thus, by halting a dialogue, which was never even a dialogue, the king gave a speech, engaged in a monologue, which by the virtue of his office acquired dialogicity. Through the king's speech and his prior boredom, the polemic initiated by the contestants has essentially turned into a dialogue. The mechanical and ritualised juxtaposition of two sealed off, abstracted perspectives became a

multivoiced text personified in the persona of the king, which dialogised both voices. But unlike the Georgian text, where this intervention may come as surprising, this is exactly how the Armenian text perceived David's intentions and, above all, perceived David himself, a historical and a literary figure, as a multivoiced text.⁵⁵

Indeed, in the Armenian translation of this passage, the dialogue did not end here but continued in a more private setting:

David loved the Armenian nation and their churches and a certain scholar, the *vardapet* at Halbat, called Sarkawag. He used to confess his sins to him; and lowering his venerable head he would be blessed by him. He would sit with him and embrace his neck, and he would say: 'I am wasting away and smell badly from my old age; remove yourself from me lest you be bothered.' But the king would kiss him and say: 'May this odour never fail me, honourable father.' He bestowed on him a village near the monastery to support him. When the latter blessed the king, placing his hands on his head he would say: 'I have found David my servant, and with holy oil I have anointed him' as far as ten verses.⁵⁶

Certainly, there existed no doubts concerning David's confessional affiliation, either for the Armenian translator or for his target audience – his was Chalcedonian – but in the Armenian version, through a masterly rhetorical technique, after his dialogic monologue, through the act of love (*philia*), David slips into a real dialogue with the Armenian holy man, thus uniting with him in spirit.

The abhorred king

A century later, in another king's presence, a similar controversy broke out. When David's great granddaughter Queen Tamar (1184–1213) summoned a military council, the generals present were both of Georgian and of Armenian faith, with religious discord existing even between two brothers and generals, Chalcedonian Zakaria and non-Chalcedonian Ivane. The anonymous historian of Tamar renders this fictional or perhaps real dispute in greater detail, masterfully highlighting the nervous tension in the hall and among the royal family. Here no more do we experience a charismatic presence of a figure comparable to David, who could have uttered two distinct voices in his monologue. Instead, the council was presided by the ghastly patriarch and the royal family was merely attending in awe. The chronicler proudly addresses the reader, ironising the Armenian penchant for disputations: 'You know of the verbose sorcery of the Armenians; they started to shout, but we gained a victory over them proper to the importance of the dispute'.⁵⁷ The impasse was reached once again and the patriarch proposed a truly abominable deal – both Georgians and Armenians would bless the Holy Communion and would give it over to the hungry dogs, to verify whose Liturgy is pleasing to God.⁵⁸ The attending Georgian crowd rejoiced when they saw that the dogs devoured the bread blessed by the Armenians, while backing off from the

‘true’ Georgian communion. Here hatred prevailed not only over rationality or rational discourse, but even over piety, forcing the queen to leave the hall in dread.

As if to counterbalance the highly anti-Armenian rhetoric of Tamar’s historian, Armenian Mxit’ar Goš dedicated his *Letter* to the two above-mentioned generals and to the Georgian royal family. In the opening, he addresses generals Zakaria and Ivane, who used to be of Armenian faith and one of them had converted to Chalcedonianism. Further, Mxit’ar addresses the Georgian patriarch and other hierarchs and finally the queen and her son. All he requested from them was to act as intermediaries between the Armenian and Georgian people and concluded his treatise with an eloquent plea:

Even though our God-loving Kings, Tamar and David will not be able to convene a great church council, because of the remoteness of Greeks, Romans and other peoples, by divine grace they can eradicate animosity between the Armenians and Georgians, so that they may not offend Christ. For this is animosity against Christ, when they trample each other’s cross, faith and churches and insult each other. . . . It was God’s wish and Christ’s will that all Christians be united in faith, but this turned out to be impossible. But what is possible must not be obstructed.⁵⁹

Dialogue instead of polemic was a possibility for Mxit’ar. An impossible reconciliation or oneness of the Church could for the time being be substituted by a dialogue, where the holy Kings, Tamar and her husband David, by the virtue of their office, could have acted as independent and objective arbiters. Dialogicity resided in the charismatic persona of the king, a Georgian and a Chalcedonian but still a ruler of the two realms, who in his or her royal persona could assume the multivocality of her subjects. Thus, the possibility for a dialogue resided in the acceptance and respect for each other’s tradition, which could have been guaranteed by the charismatic nature of the king, a concept that was to be philosophically formulated only later in the eighteenth century European enlightened absolutism.

Epilogue

Bakhtin’s celebrated words may act as an appropriate conclusion: ‘In rhetoric there is the unconditionally right and the unconditionally guilty; there is total victory, and annihilation of the opponent. In dialogue, annihilation of the opponent also annihilates the very dialogic sphere in which discourse lives’.⁶⁰ Indeed, the debates between the Armenians and Georgians, although dialogues in the primitive sense, aimed at creating a monologic world where other subjects were reduced to mere objects rather than being recognised as ‘another consciousness’. Monologism tries to close down the world it represents by pretending to be the ultimate word. In this monologic world, in the era of intense and uncompromising polemics, authors such as Arseni of Sapara, Mxitar Goš and Nersēs the Gracious engaged with and were informed by other voices, as well as created dialogic and multivoiced texts. Through the speech of the bored King of two realms, Georgian

and Armenian, monologue acquires multivoicedness and is thus transformed into a true dialogue.

To conclude the story of dialogue in mediaeval Georgia, we may recall a passage from *The Life of John and Euthymios*. *The Life* recounts the drama of the life of the Georgian monks on the Holy Mountain, the foundation and growth of the Georgian Monastery and of the continued strife that local monks underwent to abate Greek claims and to secure their rights over the Monastery.⁶¹ In the middle of these controversies, when Greeks were continuously blaming Georgians of heresy, heterodoxy and other sins, in the situation of absence of a dialogue but constant presence of debates, of lack of compromise but abundance of polemic, a certain Latin monk called Leo arrived from Rome at Mt. Athos. Here he met and befriended a local Georgian monk, Gabriel. Gabriel invited Leo to his cell, where they spent hours and days together. Spiritual love grew between the two:

Neither of them spoke any language than their native ones. But when the night fell, they would go out from their cell praying, then they would merely sit and would they converse in Divine words until the bell rang for Matins.⁶²

The two monks, at the time of the schism, separated by immense space, cultural background and hostile Greeks, constituted 'two bodies in one soul'. Through their silent dialogue, similarly to the persuasive heroes of Rustaveli's poem, they attained the highest purpose of spiritual love – through rational discourse, contemplation of the One.

Notes

- 1 Wagner, 'Munāzara'.
- 2 For an overview of the Georgian literature of this period, see Rayfield, *Literature*, 70–84. On the genre, see, e.g. Massé, 'Genre littéraire "Débat"', 137–47.
- 3 See King Arčil's (1661–1698) *Disputation of Teimuraz and Rustaveli* over the classical and contemporary literary forms: Rayfield, *Literature*, 119–20.
- 4 Cf. King Teimuraz's obsession with Persian poetic styles: Rayfield, *Literature*, 114–19.
- 5 *Gabaaseba* was exceptionally mastered by kings Teimuraz I (1606–1648), Arčil II (1647–1713) and Teimuraz II (1709–1762).
- 6 E.g. the *Homily on the Annunciation* by John Chrysostom, a similar homily attributed to Meletius of Antioch, preserved in the tenth-century P'arxali *Mravaltavi* collection, and the hymn for the Feast of Annunciation (Ivir. geo. 70) all rendered as dialogues between Archangel Gabriel and Mary. The Georgian translations are as yet unpublished.
- 7 Lang, *Georgian Saints*, 95–9; Rayfield, *Literature*, 44–5.
- 8 For an overview of the *Dogmatikon*, see Outtier, 'Dogmatikon', 217–26.
- 9 Tvaltvadze, *Colophons*, 203–4.
- 10 The stories of *Vis and Ramin*, *Layla and Majnun*, and the *Shahnameh* were widely known and quoted. See Rayfield, *Literature*, 84–96.
- 11 Rayfield, *Literature*, 70–5.
- 12 The tale, known in the West as the *Romance of Barlaam and Ioasaph*, recounts the spread of Christianity in India and a story of ascetic Balahvar who converted to Christianity Prince Iodasap. After a series of conversations and disputes, Iodasap also converts his father King Abenes and the royal court. For translation and an introduction,

- see Lang, *Balavariani*. For an overview of the reception, see Lopez and McCracken, *In Search of the Christian Buddha*, 90–144.
- 13 For the English translation with a slightly imprecise title, see Orbeliani, *Book of Wisdom and Lies*.
- 14 Cf. Christ literally emerging from the earth to prove the Christian point in the debate between Christian Gregentius and Herban the Jew. Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 51–3.
- 15 For the survey of the Georgian version, see Rayfield, *History*, 75–83.
- 16 *Visramiani*, 307–63; Gurgānī, *Vis and Ramin*, 281–321.
- 17 On the philosophy of Rustaveli and of his age, see Makharadze, ‘Philosophical Ideas’, 318–26. For a general introduction, see Rayfield, *Literature*, 84–96.
- 18 Rustaveli, *The Man in the Panther’s Skin*, 5–16.
- 19 *Ibid.*, 83.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 112.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 130–43.
- 22 *Visramiani*, 358. Note that in the Persian version, this word is absent. For the relevant passage in the Persian text, see *Vis and Ramin*, 320.
- 23 *Visramiani*, 359.
- 24 Rustaveli distinguishes between three sorts of poets, followed by a discussion on the three degrees of love: the first Love is unspoken and unattainable and is, therefore, of the first order; the second sort of lovers are earthly but through their love contemplate the first Love; whereas the third sort of lovers are not even worthy to be called so. See Rustaveli’s theory of love in Vepxist’q’aosani’s introduction, *The Man in the Panther’s Skin*, 1–6; for study, see Beynen, ‘Shota Rustaveli’, 239–51.
- 25 Rustaveli, *The Man in the Panther’s Skin*, 6: ‘I wonder why men show that they love the beloved. Why shame they her whom they love, her who slays herself for them, who is covered with wounds? If they love her not, why do they not manifest to her feelings of hatred? Why do they disgrace what they hate? But an evil man loves an evil word more than his soul or heart’.
- 26 Plato, *Symposium*, 118.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 For translation and a brief study, see *Amirandarejaniani*, especially xxiii–xxxiii for a typological study of the cycle. See also, Rayfield, *Literature*, 75–84.
- 29 *Amirandarejaniani*, 234.
- 30 For the latter, see numerous accounts in the *Life of John and Euthymios the Hagiorites* and *Life of George the Hagiorite*. See Martin-Hisard, ‘La Vie de Jean et Euthyme’, 67–142.
- 31 This disputation is preserved in the so-called *Book of Letters*. For a French translation, see appendices to Garsoïan, *L’église Arménienne*, 516–85.
- 32 For the period in question, see Garsoïan, ‘Byzantine Annexation’, 187–99; Toumanoff, ‘Armenia and Georgia’, 593–637; Toumanoff, ‘Bagratids of Iberia’, 233–316.
- 33 For a brief account of the process, see Rayfield, *Edge of Empires*, 73–85.
- 34 Bishop Ukhtanes of Sebastia, *History of Armenia*.
- 35 Aleksidze, Mahé, ‘Arsène Sapareli’, 59–132.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 94.
- 37 *Ibid.*, 86, 88–9, 97.
- 38 Cf. the anti-Armenian rhetoric of the Athonite monks. See also multiple translations of anti-Armenian invectives. Aleksidze, ‘Polemical Literature’, 185–202.
- 39 For a study of these traditions, see Aleksidze, *Making, Remembering and Forgetting*. Such invectives were widely spread in the Caucasus and often referred to in polemic. See, for example, Melikset-Bek, *Story of the Fast of Araġawor*.
- 40 For a record of the disputation, see *Dispute of Monk Ekvtime Grzeli with Sostene*, 615–21.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 615.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 617.

- 43 Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 50–1.
- 44 *Dispute of Monk Ekvtime Grzeli with Sostene*, 617.
- 45 Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, 70.
- 46 For the edition, see 'Թուղթ առ Վրացիս' յաղագս ուղղափառութեան հաւատոյ' [Letter to the Georgians on the Orthodoxy of Faith], *Ganjasar* 6 (1996), 340–402.
- 47 The same methodology was applied by another Armenian polemicist Armenian Katholikos Nersēs IV the Gracious (1166–1173), who debated with the Byzantines over the Armenian faith. See Keshishian, *Saint Nerses the Gracious*, 99–209.
- 48 *Dispute of Monk Ekvtime Grzeli with Sostene*, 621.
- 49 The stance that King Bagrat⁴ (or rather imagined Bagrat⁴) took has parallels in several mediaeval courts. Cf., for example, with the 1268 disputation in Barcelona where King James I of Aragon awarded the losing side for he had 'never heard an unjust cause so nobly defended'. See Roth, 'Disputation in Barcelona', 117–44. Similar stories are recorded on the Mughal Emperor of India, Akbar the Great (1542–1605) and his particular interest in staging theological debates between the Muslims and the Jesuit missionaries. See MacFarlane, 'Akbar and the Jesuits', 464–71; Anooshahr, 'Dialogism', 220–54.
- 50 Thomson, *Rewriting*, 346–7.
- 51 *Ibid.*
- 52 Although the English translator rendered Georgian *šec* 'q'ina as 'irritated', even more precisely it means 'bored'.
- 53 Thomson, *Rewriting*, 347.
- 54 *Ibid.*
- 55 Cf. Anooshahr, 'Dialogism', 229 on the very similar perception of the Mughal Emperor Akbar who 'is presented as the sublime seeker of truth and as one who transcends partisan and sectarian bickering. . . . The supreme position of the emperor as just arbiter is due precisely to this ability to listen. The emperor loves *ma 'nī* (meaning) and dislikes *guft u gū* (empty chatter) *sukhan*, regardless of who speaks it (*sukhangū*). In other words he has an ear for anyone who has something meaningful to say'.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 347–9.
- 57 *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, 263.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 263–7.
- 59 Mxitar Vardapet Goš, 'Letter to the Georgians', 401–2.
- 60 As quoted in Bakhtin, *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, xxxvi.
- 61 See Martin-Hisard, 'La Vie de Jean et Euthyme', 67–142.
- 62 Grdzeldze, *Georgian Monks on Mount Athos*, 61; translation slightly modified by Nikoloz Aleksidze.

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13 Embedded dialogues and dialogical voices in Palaiologan prose and verse

Niels Gaul

This chapter analyses instances of the discursive mode and of dialogues embedded in late Byzantine rhetoric, as well as pertinent examples of dialogues proper, along the two closely interrelated interpretive fields of performance and mimesis.¹ It shows that embedded dialogues and dialogical elements remained popular and, if anything, increased over the final centuries of Byzantium: in doing so, it focuses on examples that have not yet received much attention.

It goes without saying that the discursive mode (embedded dialogues) existed far beyond dialogues proper and was a marked feature of rhetorical discourse from the very beginning: it occurs in the Homeric epics, historiography and Athenian oratory as well as the Gospels.² In late antiquity, it became a prominent feature of hagiography and homilies; in Byzantium, it recurred in oratory and epistolography as well as novels and the so-called ‘vernacular’ romances.³ As a single chapter cannot offer a comprehensive survey of this rich material, the present one introduces a few late Byzantine examples of ‘dialogue’ conducted not between author and primary audience – thus rhetorical questions, gestures, applause are excluded⁴ – but intratextually, between the author, be this rhetor or poet, and a third party.⁵ This practice, known as *hypophora* (ὑποφορά; in Latin, *subiectio*) in rhetorical theory,⁶ is most explicitly described by the rhetorician Tiberios, a somewhat shadowy figure of the third or fourth century CE known for his analysis of Demosthenes’s rhetoric:

Hypophora occurs when the oration does not progress seamlessly, but by proposing something as if from the opponent or as if from the matter itself, answers to itself, imitating two speakers in exchange. This figure possesses both beauty and vividness.⁷

The rapid exchange of such questions and answers creates vivacity (γοργότης) according to the much more widely read Hermogenes; whereas Longinos suggests that the rapid interplay of questions and answers offered spontaneity (ὅταν αὐτὰ [= τὰ παθητικὰ] φαίνεται . . . γεννᾶν ὁ καιρός; ἐξ ὑπογύου), transmitted emotions (ἡ δ’ ἐρώτησις ἢ εἰς ἑαυτὸν καὶ ἀποκρισις μιμεῖται τοῦ πάθους τὸ ἐπίκαιρον) and, ultimately, increased the rhetor’s authenticity (οὐ μόνον ὑψηλότερον ἐποίησε τῷ σχηματισμῷ τὸ ρηθὲν ἀλλὰ καὶ πιστότερον).⁸ From such *subiectiones*, it is but a

small step to embed full dialogues between a third and fourth party, or several parties. One may further assume that inserted dialogical passages intended to transmit ‘character’⁹ – one’s own as well as of friends and foes – as pseudo-Demetrios indirectly emphasised in his discussion of the epistolary genre:

Like the dialogue, the letter should be strong in characterisation. Everyone writes the letter in the virtual image of his own soul. In every other form of speech it is possible to see the writer’s character, but in none so clearly as in the letter.¹⁰

Certainly from the eleventh century onwards Byzantine performance culture ascribed renewed significance to rhetorical concepts of *ēthos*, and hence progymnastic *ēthopoiiai* which, in turn, constitute one seminal ingredient of the dialogical format.¹¹

In all genres and even in what is commonly perceived as dialogues proper, the discursive mode often depends on certain markers to function: the so-called *inquit* or speech-introducing formulae (SIFs), in their fullest form consisting of a verb of action, a connective and a verb of speaking, followed by direct or, more rarely, oblique speech. Sometimes, but not by default, SIFs correspond with speech-concluding formulae.¹² While this chapter will look at some examples featuring SIFs, by means of introduction and in order to demonstrate the sliding scale from *hypophora* to embedded dialogue in (late) Byzantine rhetoric, it is ultimately more interested in embedded and freestanding dialogues defined exactly by the limited use or, ideally, absence of such formulae; i.e. dialogical elements or dialogues in which the change of speakers, the attribution of verses or lines is perceivable not only, but most obviously, by means of a siglum (or scholium) in the margin, often executed in red ink, that provides the name of the speaker.¹³

Reading Byzantine dialogues from the performance angle, the challenge is to hypothesise plausibly how the dialogic may have manifested itself in such performative situations; to my knowledge, there is no direct evidence of, or ‘stage directions’ for, any performance of Byzantine dialogical texts surviving. At the same time, there is no doubt that these were frequently declaimed in reading circles and so-called ‘literary *theatra*’.¹⁴ Did dialogical elements prompt different patterns of performance, such as modulation of voice or specific gestures? Would it have been possible for a single rhetor – if we assume that the author was most likely also any given text’s first performer – to perform a rhetorical composition featuring dialogue, as was the case in imperial and late antique Rome?¹⁵ For this very reason, this essay is not interested in dialogues featuring two characters (*prosōpa*) only, as I take it for granted that one moderately skilled performer would have managed to impersonate two alternating voices. Finally, with regard to the mimetic aspects of dialogicity, the challenge is to hypothesise how Byzantine audiences would have reacted to dialogical elements: what difference, if any, did it make whether a text was written in dialogical mode? In other words, what were the mimetic effects of this format? Did the dramatic-dialogic mode preserve some of the world-imitating and, at the same time, world-creating capacities it had

possessed in antiquity, opening up possible worlds to the audience – and perhaps more so than any non-dialogical alternative?¹⁶

Discursive mode to embedded dialogues

In terms of embedded dialogues, the first and least pronounced, as it were, example on the upward scale from discursive to dialogical dates to May 1294, when Maximos Planoudes (c.1250–c.1305) was commissioned by the Emperor Andronikos II (r. 1282–1328) to perform an oration at court in order to mark the coronation of sixteen-year-old Michael (IX) Palaiologos as co-emperor. This oration has received a detailed interpretation by Dimiter Angelov who highlighted its dialogical element and persuasively credited Planoudes with re-introducing a deliberative/political aspect into imperial panegyrics.¹⁷ In the present context, it is the oration's dialogical element that is of particular interest:

If therefore I say this, another rose to say that this ought not to be and become this way, but that it is necessary that the men fill rank in another way; give up the service sufficing a horse because the one mounting it cannot touch the ground with his feet, just as if they desired to become birds; avoid weapons, for austere garments are inconvenient for those who choose to live more tenderly; leave the triremes to rot on the props (for why does one need seafare? For no second Aeëtes [will be] again and no golden fleece, so that we ourselves would manifestly become Argonauts) . . . – If this is being said by each of us, whom shall we say that you want to approach for advice, emperor? Even if you do not speak now, everybody perceives how you look at me and receive what is being said right against your mind. [. . .] But from elsewhere someone else rose and again retorted: 'Then do not you hear', he says, 'the prophet David, a man who enjoys fame with everyone, who although he was king says "He delighteth not in the strength of the horse: he taketh not pleasure in the legs of a man" [Ps. 146 (147):10], and again: "For I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me" [Ps. 43 (44):7].' – Are you truly happy? You reminded me of David all right. Then don't even you hear, o fellow, the story about him, that such powerful men were around him and equipped with weapons that three could break a whole phalanx?¹⁸

In this context of Planoudes's famous advice on Andronikos II's military policies, two insertions by an anonymous opponent are introduced by proper SIFs – a verb of motion followed by a verb of speaking: 'another rose to say' (ἕτερος δ' ἀναστὰς φήσκει) in the first instance, 'but from elsewhere someone else rose and again retorted' (ἐτέρωθεν δ' ἀναστὰς ἕτερος πάλιν ἀντέκρουσεν) in the second instance. In the first case, Planoudes chose to render the opponent's arguments in oblique speech; in the second, the opponent is answering directly. Interestingly and entertainingly, Planoudes chose to ridicule his opponent; in the second instance, he pointed out that King David was not only a shepherd, but also a warrior. In the light of dialogical theory, this may matter, as 'political

panegyrics' – outlined by Hermogenes and commented upon by Planoudes himself – combined the encomiastic with the symbouleutic/deliberative and, indeed, the satirical (i.e. Plato plus Lucian). It is unlikely that the identity of Planoudes's anonymous opponent is ever going to be unveiled; Angelov suggests that no other than Nikephoros Choumnos himself, at that time Andronikos II's *mesazōn*, may have been the target.¹⁹

Be that as it may, what one can safely infer is that the latter, Choumnos (c. 1260–1327) – in orations dated to around 1310 and 1322 – used the same dialogical device, and that he did so in the same partly deliberative, partly satirical context as just witnessed in Planoudes's imperial oration. These are the famous oration *On Justice*, addressed to the *gerousia* of Thessalonike, and the funeral oration for Theoleptos, metropolitan of Philadelphieia. The chronologically earlier oration, to the *gerousia* of Thessalonike, is almost exclusively quoted for the famous *ekphrasis* of the early fourteenth-century city, which, however, prefaces the text as a mere *captatio benevolentiae*. The body of the oration that follows is a highly relevant piece of information as to how the imperial court at Constantinople hoped to deal with the empire's unruly second city in the second decade of the fourteenth century, on the eve of the first civil war.²⁰ It is important to keep in mind that the *gerousia*, before which the text must have been performed, was the primary audience. While the second part of the oration consists of a praise of justice and a *psogos* of avarice, the third part is what has most interest in the present context. As Nikephoros Choumnos progresses, he increasingly assumes a dialogical scheme: a 'you' (σοι, σε, etc., finally ἀνθρώπε) is introduced into the narrative that finally turns into an anonymous – stereotypical? – magnate oppressing the poor. In any case, it mirrors the feature that Planoudes had employed:

Man [i.e. the magnate], what say you? After you have built a treasure from injustice and put it away for yourself evilly you say to your soul, 'You have many virtues?' . . . Paul shall persuade you, David shall persuade you, the latter saying 'he that loveth unrighteousness hateth his own soul' [Ps. 10:5], whereas Paul said: 'the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is' [~ 1Cor 3:13] . . . You do not only plot against those in the neighbourhood, but already assault those from afar; and not only do you rise against the one close by, but forthwith also against those far away, robbing possessions, devouring souls, as someone cruel you loom over those of lesser power, drive [them] away from their possessions, drive them away from their houses, rob them of their things, alienate them from their belongings . . . and this you, the strong and powerful, who has an abundance of strength to exert pressure with candid speech.²¹

Next Choumnos introduces the magnate's followers who encroach upon the poor, until finally the magnate reappears and is allocated a bit of direct speech, although introduced in the third person:

All the anyhow greedy and remarkable both in regard to their wealth and insatiate desire . . . build a circle around the poor one with [houses of] two

and three storeys, spending lavishly, and besiege him in this manner striving to pillage him. . . . And the excuse is haughty, 'For he [i.e. the magnate] was unable to endure this,' they say, 'as he was being insulted.' . . . And he [again the magnate] critically surveys the house from which he expelled that [poor] one; then he scorns it as poor and ordinary and denies the poor man's wretched suffering saying 'If only he had owned a splendid house, if suitably furnished, if rich!' And he calls that one a wretch and says that 'we have been freed of one of the bad ones.'²²

This in turn is followed by an immediate address by Choumnos against the magnate in the second person – a vivid staccato of rhetorical questions brings the dialogical aspect back into focus:

What say you? that wretched one? that evildoer? who commits no injustice? cowering? shivering? who does not even dare to glance at your splendid furnishings? besieged? stabbed? suffering and enduring all and everything?—Of which evil did you relieve us?²³

As becomes obvious, the opening and concluding questions in the second person singular frame the whole passage dialogically.

Yet another decade later, in 1322, in his funeral oration commemorating Theoleptos the metropolitan of Philadelphia and certainly performed in a *theatron* – 'let me bring this into the centre [of this circle]'²⁴ – that was presumably convened in Constantinople, Nikephoros Choumnos can be shown to have employed a much stronger dialogical device. He puts considerable rhetorical/dialogical effort into actualising the first encounter of the Emperor Michael VIII Palaiologos and the young Theoleptos. The emperor had ordered Theoleptos to court, where he intended to interrogate him about his upbringing, family and *paideia*:

And this one [i.e. Theoleptos], with noble and firm mind [said]: 'There is no need now, majesty, either to ask me about these things, or for me to answer: but [to ask] why we are grieved and stand before your throne.'

And the emperor: 'What are you talking about?'

And this one: 'About Christ and the right confession, given by him unto us.' 'What do we appear to be to you? not Christians? indeed, if you wish, under oaths we shall prove to be Christians.'

But he [Theoleptos]: 'Not with oaths and words, but deeds and action one must prove the truth.'

'And why,' he [the emperor] said, 'do you know to scorn us by our actions?' And the man of truth said again with unflinching frankness, 'Because you have distorted the Holy Scripture.'

And the emperor, immediately filled with anger and wrath, yelled 'The Holy Scripture? the Holy Scripture? we?' – and this repeatedly, boiling over with anger.²⁵

This instance is visibly the most dialogical of those encountered so far. Direct speech meets direct speech twice, which would require some performative talent on the part of Choumnos or whoever of his entourage was required to read out the oration. SIFs are frequently shortened or postponed (i.e. inserted into the direct speech); the fullest one occurs towards the end, where a verb of action – ‘the emperor . . . filled with anger and wrath’ – is followed by a verb of speaking (ἐξεβόησε). It is worthwhile keeping in mind that this episode occurred after about one-third of the whole oration, and while there are episodes of direct speech elsewhere,²⁶ this dialogical encounter is the only of its kind, clearly marking a performative climax by dialogically conjuring and actualising a past challenge to imperial authority and displaying Theoleptos’s bold and brave character.

Alexios Makrembolites’s *Dialogue between the Rich and the Poor* is so well known and researched that detailed discussion can be omitted from this chapter; not least as it is a freestanding dialogue between two *prosōpa* only.²⁷ Yet a much shorter dialogical piece by the same author, inserted into his so-called *Historical Oration*, dedicated to the (ultimately disastrous) events of the 1348/49 Byzantine-Genoese war, seems to have received much less attention.²⁸ This is a short dialogue between a ‘perplexed’ (διαπορῶν) citizen of Constantinople, certainly meant to represent Makrembolites himself, and the personification of divine justice, Themis. Up to this point, Makrembolites (*fl.* 1342–53) wrote, his narrative had run straightforward; in fact, everyone in Constantinople was full of hope and confident of victory over the overbearing Genoese of Galata. In a dialogical prolepsis – which he composed of course after the humiliating defeat – Makrembolites proceeded to shatter this optimism:

. . . yet – oh! – how could I describe the tragedy of the reversed fortune of the Romans and the collapse of their unfortunate hopes! Or how bear the memory of the event without tears?

THE PERPLEXED: Oh what a sudden reversal! What things did the spectators see with their own eyes, and their hearts did not burst! Oh what misfortune! What mortal did ever witness such a change at the spur of the moment? Which hellish demon envied the life and fame of the Romans, and snatched it like a lion? What ill-omened wind bringing something violent and terrible, immediately blew out the torch kindled above their heads, and filled their faces with dishonour, shame, and dejection? What sparks of etherial fire quenched their visual faculty so that they perceived water as firm land, and suspected the warships carrying them as poisonous snakes?²⁹ Which envious and mean-spirited devil ripped out their auspicious hopes by the roots and turned them into their opposite? Which water-demon turned their fairs and feasts to grief, and the lamentations of the Latins into merriment and exultation?

THEMIS: ‘I,’ said Divine Justice, ‘have brought about this paradoxon as I was held in dishonour. For a whole people reveres and honours me like God, and receives glory from me and widening. . . .’³⁰

Two rhetorical questions posed by the narrator, that is, Makrembolites's authorial voice, are followed by the first speech of the Perplexed, which in itself consists of a mere string of exclamations and rhetorical questions culminating in his asking which devil (τελχιν φθονερός καὶ μικρόθυμος, 154.1–2) could have caused such unforeseeable misfortune; thus there is a very smooth, almost imperceptible transition from the narrator's voice to the Perplexed's voice, and one wonders whether this distinction was at all actualised. There can be no doubt about the next change of speaker though: 'I', says Themis (ἐγώ, φησὶν ἡ Θέμις, with shortened SIF), 'have caused this paradoxon, as I was held in dishonour', etc. As the transition from Makrembolites's narratorial rôle to the first speech of the Perplexed was meant to be smooth, consciously blurring the boundaries between the two *prosōpa*, and as Themis's answer was introduced by a postponed SIF, it was possible even for a moderately adept performer to perform this integrated dialogue, at least to this point, on his own. With the next change of speaker, one does not find an SIF, but the first phrase of the Perplexed's second insertion addresses Themis as 'God's child' (Θεοῦ τέκνος, 154.22) and thus makes it clear that it cannot be pronounced by Themis herself. The next marker of this kind is 'Yes' (ναί, 154.26), which can only occur at the beginning of a speech act and introduces Themis's longest speech (46 lines in the edition), followed by a paragraph in the narrative mode describing the disastrous defeat of the Byzantines. Only after the account of this inexplicable disaster – which had now become if not understandable, then at least conceivable, as through this dialogical encounter – the Perplexed asks another two rhetorical questions (156.15–20; parallel, in a sense, to those which introduced the dialogue and again purposely blurring the rôles of narrator and dialogical *prosōpon*) before the historiographical account resumes. Alexios Makrembolites, writing a generation after Choumnos, seems to have brought the latter's advancing conception of embedded dialogical elements to perfection – at the same time reviving a feature Ignatios the Deacon had already employed in his ninth-century *Life of Patriarch Nikephoros* with its central dialogue between emperor (Leo V, r. 813–820) and patriarch (Nikephoros himself):³¹ by integrating a (short) dialogue proper into a rhetorical narrative; yet again, a dialogue that was possible to be performed by a single rhetor.

Voices

Makrembolites's embedded dialogue builds a convenient bridge to this second part, which briefly looks at dialogues proper featuring three and more *prosōpa*. It concentrates on three dialogical compositions by Manuel Philes (*fl.* 1294–1334)³² – a monody for the *despotēs* John Palaiologos, third son of the Emperor Andronikos II Palaiologos; a dialogue of Man, i.e. Philes, and Soul, conjuring Philes's deceased wife; and the so-called *Dramatic Ethopoeia*, which by its very title denies being a dialogue and offers a dialogically performed encomium of John Kantakouzenos – followed by concise remarks on Nikephoros Gregoras's (1293/94–1358/61) *Phlorentios* and Philotheos of Selymbria's (*fl.* 1342/43–1389) *Theological Dialogue*.

Chronologically, the first seems to be Manuel Philes's monody for the *despotēs* John Palaiologos (d. 1307), composed in 607 twelve-syllable verses. The title runs as follows: 'Monody for the *despotēs* kyr John Palaiologos, in which he [Philes] introduces the following characters of the drama: (senior) emperor; empress (*despoina*); (junior) emperor; *basilissa*; (senior) emperor; servant; the servant speaks the first lines'. The junior emperor must be John's step-brother, the aforementioned Michael IX; the *basilissa* the widow of the deceased, Eirene Choumnaina. There is reason to believe that the poem was composed for performance and as an inscription at the same time: 'Surely, I give these [verses] to the carvers of stone to engrave [them] onto this tomb of the *despotēs*'.³³ In fact, it would have been possible for one rhetor/poet, e.g. Philes himself, to perform the monody: not only was the sequence of speakers clarified in the prefacing scholium, and might thus well have been announced at the beginning of the performance. Also the speakers themselves usually signal (e.g. by means of rhetorical questions) or straightforwardly announce their exit; and the entering speaker provides his or her credentials within the first few lines. Thus the servant, already announced by the scholium, makes his role clear early on by describing his function in the deceased's life:

Which chamber, tell me, is fortunate in your presence?
Which listener is present when you speak?
Which servant is with you when spending leisure time?
Which friends have you acquired that remain with you?
Who is your guardian when you desire to sleep?³⁴

So does the senior emperor:

In no way should it be necessary for us to cry for you
Who was led from evening right into light
And lives well and in contact with God.
Because you cause nature to grieve
I tune a song of fatherly grief,
o cub, son, and young *despotēs*.³⁵

The empress is shown with typical patterns of female behaviour, and clearly marks the end of her speech:

How then will I not tear my hair over you?
How not scratch my cheeks with my nails?
For it is necessary that I mix my streams of tears
with the red-dyed mishap of shreds;
I would have loved if I had a child
Either copper or iron or wood by nature . . .
[. . .]
Alas, alas, confounded by death and toils
I am faint-hearted and cannot speak [any more].³⁶

The junior emperor reveals himself by his fifth line, if not before:

And thus time rendered you dead early.
 The father grieves and the mother cries
 And the whole family grieves too, as is just,
 Dressed in black-dyed garments.
 The son measures the bouts of tears
 Really desiring you who has died to live
 O kinsman, even if you were snatched from us [. . .]
 Now I am silent and grieve for you by myself.³⁷

The widow (*basilissa*) in the fourth:

Even if the whole creation has strength for grieving,
 Even if the emperors abound in tears,
 Even if the empress is vexed with pains,
 Even if I, *basilissa* until very recently [i.e. wife of the deceased *despotēs*],
 cry;
 Even if the father while alive does not seem to me to see light . . .
 [. . .]
 But I who suffered unmeasurable misfortune
 Fall silent even though I was brought forward by my pains
 Suffering an abundance of horrible misfortune.
 But almost the whole creation pities me
 As someone bereft of a universal grace.³⁸

Finally, the senior emperor starts his second speech with an unambiguous, ‘oh son’ (ὦ παῖ, v. 522), thus leaving no doubt as to his identity. While elaborate in structure, a single performer could nevertheless have actualised the sequence of members of the imperial family and John’s trusted yet unnamed servant.

As to Philes’s reasons for composing this particular monody in dialogical format, one can only speculate: possibly this reflected the patron’s request – presumably the Emperor Andronikos II himself, who handed these verses to the stonecarvers. Or was it perhaps put into the dialogical form so that it could evoke the presence of the emperor in Thessalonike, where John had died in 1307 – presumably, the *despotēs*’ mother, the Empress Yolanda-Eirene (of Montferrat), was residing in this ‘second city’ of the empire. Deeply estranged from her husband, she was presiding over her own court.³⁹ In this sense the poem, wherever it was performed, created a possible, ‘better’ world as it paraded the, in reality, deeply divided, imperial family in peaceful harmony before the eyes of the audience. Linking and cross-referencing the members dialogically would have had a much more direct impact than any prose oration praising the harmony among members of the imperial family as abstractly as dutifully, could have achieved. Incidentally and intriguingly, the empress Yolanda-Eirene is the only one who

calls her son by his Christian name, John (thrice, vv. 261, 267, 300) while Michael IX refers to his step-brother twice as ὁ Χαριτόνουμε (vv. 378, 399).

Structure of the monody

Servant	vv. 1–113	113 v.
Senior emperor (Andronikos II)	vv. 114–223	110 v.
Empress (<i>despoina</i>)	vv. 224–317	94 v.
Junior emperor (Michael IX)	vv. 318–417	100 v.
Widow (<i>basilissa</i>)	vv. 418–521	104 v.
Senior emperor	vv. 522–597	76 v.
Epigramma	vv. 598–607	10 v.

Moving to the *Dialogue between Man and Soul* – a common topic yet idiosyncratically realised – it is possible to arrive at very much the same conclusions: the dialogue, limited to three *prosōpa*, could easily have been performed by one skilled rhetor/poet, not least facilitated by abundant direct addresses: φίλῃ/φιλτάτῃ μοι ψυχῇ, φίλῃ ψυχῇ, ψυχῇ μου ταπεινῇ from the part of Man/Philes (e.g. vv. 1, 41, 82, 101, 161, 231); ἄνθρωπε or μικρόψυχε from the part of the Soul (e.g. vv. 11, 71). The appearance of the wife is long heralded, until she is finally conjured by the Soul; she enters with a series of six rhetorical questions, all starting with τί and accusing her husband. This is unparalleled in the entire verse dialogue and thus leaves no doubt that a change of speaker occurred and a new *prosōpon* has ‘entered’:

SOUL: . . . Hither to us, dearest woman, hither! And alive speak clearly and comfort me this man of same soul [= Philes], if you see that he is desiring to die. Have you yet acquired your voice, or shall I add further? For I believe to have awoken you from slumber as someone who is not unwilling once you have agreed with me, even though you were previously in a somewhat disheartened manner.

WIFE: What is this, you who loves your body? What is this, you petty-minded man? Why are you calling me hither to dust from the heavens? Why do you urge me to return to my body crawling on the ground? Why to the darkness of suffering from never-setting light? Why to prison from freedom? . . .⁴⁰

The only performatively problematic change of speakers occurs between vv. 230 and 231, from the Wife to Philes (rather than to the Soul, as in the two preceding instances), where, however, the by now common phrase φίλῃ μοι ψυχῇ immediately makes it clear that the speaker must be Philes again.

Structure of the Dialogue between Man and Soul

Man (Philes)— <i>Psyche</i>	18 × 10 (9/9)	vv. 1–180
(Deceased) Wife – <i>Psyche</i>	5 × 10 (3/2)	vv. 181–230
Man (Philes)	1 × 10	vv. 231–40

The seemingly most complex dialogical composition by Philes would then presumably be the latest one, a *Dramatic Ethopoeia* in praise of the *megas domestikos* John Kantakouzenos. At first glance set in fourteenth-century Constantinople, the dialogue features an allegorical world in which a chorus of *Aretai* crowns the virtuous *megas domestikos*. Yet again, any hope for indicators of a multi-voiced performance is thwarted. Although featuring no less than fifteen characters over almost a thousand (966) verses – Philes, *Nous*, the chorus of the *Aretai*: the four ‘cardinal’ virtues, *Phronesis* (Prudence/Wisdom), *Andreia* (Fortitude), *Dikaio-syne* (Justice), *Sophrosyne* (Moderation); followed by the eight minor virtues, *Aletheia* (Truth), *Mneme* (Memory), *Eleemosyne* (Mercy), *Praotes* (Gentleness), *Anchinoia* (Sagacity), *Euthytes* (Righteousness), *Enkrateia* (Self-Control), *Tapei-nosis* (Modesty) – verbal transitions duly indicate changes of speakers. Thus *Nous* announces the arrival of the virtues (‘The chariot of the virtues runs hither to honour the man and wishing to applaud him’), and by addressing both *Nous* and Philes in their first line, the Virtues make clear that they cannot be either: ‘Why this, *Nous*? What this boldness, Philes?’ *Nous* then introduces the encomia of the four cardinal Virtues (‘Weave then for him [Kantakouzenos] the crown from the roses of heavenly dew you have with you’), and equally announces the arrival of the minor Virtues: ‘Alas, again another sound alerts me: For behold! a group of virgins flows in! . . . For they come to us from some new Edem with a crown of unfading flowers’. Once the minor Virtues have sung their praises, Philes’s voice in the dialogue makes clear that it is now he speaking by means of four verses that effectively preclude any other possibility: ‘O *Nous*, come forth again and teach me; rather, renew my perception! For the august group of virgins, through the matters it has spoken well, has startled me’.⁴¹

For the remainder of the poem, the strict order (stanzas of seven verses) and regular change of speakers between Philes and *Nous*, indicated by Philes’s very first words: ‘Teacher *Nous*, come forward to Byzantium’ (παιδεύτᾳ Νοῦ, πρόελθε τῆς Βυζαντίδος), makes it easy to follow. Enticingly and perhaps incidentally, this latest of Philes’s dialogues here discussed can be connected to the household/court of the *megas domestikos* John Kantakouzenos. If the hypothesis holds true that Kantakouzenos was the very *megas domestikos* whose role at the fourteenth-century court largely defined this official’s rôle in the handbook of ceremonial, known as Pseudo-Kodinos’s,⁴² then a number of dialogical compositions in the so-called ‘vernacular’, most prominently the *Book of Birds* (*Poulologos*), can be tentatively tied to the same milieu, offering a glimpse of dialogical performance culture in the highest echelons of mid-fourteenth century Constantinopolitan society: dialogical texts, so much can be ascertained, were in favour at the imperial court and its satellites.⁴³

Structure of the Dramatic Ethopoeia

Philes – <i>Nous</i>	36 × 7 (18/18)	vv. 1–252
Chorus of the twelve <i>Aretai</i>	1 × 7	vv. 253–259
Philes – <i>Nous</i>	2 × 7 (1/1)	vv. 260–273
‘Cardinal’ <i>Aretai</i> , nos. 1–4	4 × 7	vv. 274–301
<i>Nous</i>	1 × 7	vv. 302–308
<i>Aretai</i> , nos. 5–12	8 × 7	vv. 309–364
Philes – <i>Nous</i>	85 × 7 (43/42)	vv. 365–959
Kantakouzenos	1 × 7	vv. 960–966

(Philes = 434 v.; *Nous* = 434 v.; *Aretai* = 91 v.; Kantakouzenos = 7 v.)

Of the late Byzantine dialogues of Platonic type, two particularly stand out featuring more than two *prosōpa*: Gregoras’s famous *Phlorentios* and Philotheos of Selymbria’s *Theological Dialogue*. As it happens, Gregoras’s *Phlorentios* is the only late Byzantine dialogue attested in a different context, as Gregoras devoted a paragraph to it in his *Roman History*. After emphasising his complete victory over Barlaam in the famous debate conducted incidentally in the palace of the *meḡas domestikos* John Kantakouzenos, he gives the title; the *initium* and a short key to the code necessary to decipher the *prosōpa*:

But before long he [Barlaam] was proven to be a monkey and, I would more or less say, despised by everybody and publicly made fun of. How this came about is possible to find out for those who want to hear, from the dialogue I have composed giving in to the requests of many wise men; in it I cover the subject matter in more detail. Its title is *Phlorentios, or About Wisdom*, its beginning: [Gregoras quotes the opening lines of the dialogue in full = *Phlorentios*, 1–7]. The names of the speakers and events were changed by me in the dialogue; instead of the city of the Byzantines, Athens was introduced; for the rulers of the Romans, Herakleidai and Kekropidai; for Nikephoros Nikagoras; and everything that follows is clear to whoever observes carefully.⁴⁴

This is essentially an abridged version of the prefacing scholium.⁴⁵ The scholium gives a good idea of how *mimēsis* was employed toward the creation of a past, yet parallel and highly relevant mirror-world. From the performative point of view, the *Phlorentios* is one of the most intriguing pieces, as it dialogically re-performs, and frames, Gregoras’s own dialogical, real-life performance, presenting an idealised image of the original audience’s reactions to the audience of this meta-dialogue, as it were – which may in turn have been partly identical with the original audience.⁴⁶ Even though a considerable amount of skill would have been required, the *Phlorentios* could be performed by a single rhetor.

Of the *Theological Dialogue* composed by Gregoras’s one-time disciple Philotheos the later metropolitan of Selymbria, it suffices to highlight but one fact: that, apart from the mere seven-line chorus of the Virtues (*Aretai*) in Philes’s *Dramatic Ethopoeia* – plus perhaps Gregoras’s *Phlorentios*, where Gregoras referred to the followers of the two Andronikoi as ‘Kekropides’ and ‘Herakleides’,

respectively, creating a collective but leaving it at that – it seems the only late Byzantine dialogue that realised the potential of a chorus: 190 out of 2927 lines in Vakalopoulou's 1992 edition are being performed by the chorus, which amounts to no more – but also no less – than six per cent of the total.⁴⁷ A chorus had first made its appearance in Byzantine dialogical texts in Michael Haploucheir's twelfth-century *Dramation*;⁴⁸ in a sense, this short dialogical composition even featured two choruses, the Muses and the chorus proper. For the Palaiologan period, it is tempting to link this particular feature to the contemporary study of the triads of the ancient dramatic poets – Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes.⁴⁹ It can be shown that at least in Thessalonike, in the circles around Magistros and Triklinios, an interest in the attribution and direction of verses/lines began to arise – testifying to the fact that the content of the ancient dramas did become increasingly interesting –, a feature notably absent from Manuel Moschopoulos's roughly contemporary commentaries composed in Constantinople.⁵⁰ It may here suffice to mention John Katrarios's famous but fragmentary contemporary attempt at composing a comedy (surviving in MS Escor. Φ. II. 19).⁵¹ This is a good example of genre modulation, showing also that the rising scale from dialogical element to dialogue potentially, and potentially easily, extends at its highest to drama.

Conclusions

This chapter has offered a somewhat formalistic analysis of late Byzantine embedded dialogues and dialogical compositions featuring two and more *prosōpa*, demonstrating that all these texts could be performed by a single speaker.⁵² It has also shown how the comparative immediacy of the dialogical mode helped create plausible worlds of *parrhēsia* and harmony (Choumnos, Philes, Philotheos of Selymbria); allegorical worlds in which Virtues, one's Soul and Divine Justice were performing outside the frame of the more narrowly defined theological dialogue (Philes and Makrembolites; to this, one could add the city of Theodoro in the 1395 dialogue by the monk Matthaïos⁵³); and past and parallel, but decidedly not 'escapist' or 'backward-looking', worlds (Gregoras). To a varying degree, all these are fictional worlds actualised and realised by dialogical performances in the late Byzantine *theatron*, thus clearly and visibly transgressing the sphere of a merely 'literary mimesis' usually allowed for in Byzantine rhetoric. With this in mind, the chapter finally returns to the text from which this volume started.⁵⁴ Having led Neophron into the trap, Palaitimos closes it:

So it is necessary to follow the ancients in every regard? Or is it perhaps sometimes necessary to innovate? For you yourselves – innovating in fairly relevant matters, and disregarding what had seemed proper to your fathers – you yourselves do not believe you are committing anything outrageous: what those six hundred years ago thought prudent you attempt to review; what seemed right to our fathers from then till now, about which the elders had understanding, you will not see, as if you were the better judges of all things.⁵⁵

Yet if I may twist this quotation against its ‘father’, it certainly seems worthwhile exploring further to what degree in the Palaiologan period dialogues and/or dialogical elements indeed became a field of rhetorical innovation regarding features of structure and the number of *prosōpa*, playing their rôle in creating literary ‘realities’ and, ultimately, fictional worlds.

Notes

- 1 For the discursive mode as opposed to the non-dialogical, so-called narrative or descriptive mode, see Agapitos, *Narrative Structure*, 141–3.
- 2 For Homer see, e.g. Griffin, ‘The Speeches’; for early historiography, see Zali, *Herodotean Rhetoric*; Scardino, *Herodot und Thukydides*; and Stadter, *Speeches in Thucydides*; for oratory, see Gotteland, ‘Du discours au dialogue’. Hall, ‘Lawcourt Dramas’, is very instructive on performance but has nothing to say on dialogical elements.
- 3 Especially the *Life* of Cyril Philotes has been singled out for its abundant use of the discursive mode; see Mullett, ‘Novelisation in Byzantium’, 14–21; Cunningham, ‘Dramatic Device or Didactic Tool?’ For epistolographical exchanges in romances, see Agapitos, ‘Αφηγηματική σημασία’; for an example of a dialogical letter, see Constantine Akropolites, *Letter*, 195, ed. Romano, 257–66: in this long letter characterised by many dialogical passages, Akropolites addresses a philosophical treatise in which Emperor Andronikos II had argued that air is moister than water. I owe this last reference to Alexander Riehle, who discusses another intriguing example, John Chortasmenos’s *Funeral Lament for Andreas Asanes and his Son*, in his chapter on ‘Rhetorical Practice’ for Stratis Papaioannou’s *Oxford Handbook of Byzantine Literature*.
- 4 These remain a desideratum for further research. For antiquity, see, e.g. Korenjak, *Publikum und Redner*, and Boegehold, *Where a Gesture*.
- 5 This could, in theory, on occasion be one specific member of the audience who, however, for all we know remained silent even if challenged in this way: thus frequently Aischines in the case of Demosthenes and possibly Nikephoros Choumnos in the case of Planoudes, discussed below.
- 6 Lausberg, *Handbuch*, §§ 771, 775, 820–5. Alternatively, it can be referred to as ἀνθυποφορά, ἀπόφασις, αἰτιολογία, ἀπόκρισις, διαλεκτικὸν or διαλογισμός.
- 7 Tiberius, *Demosthenic Figures*, ed. Spengel, 3.77.5–26: ὑποφορά δὲ ἐστὶν ὅταν μὴ ἐξῆς προβαίῃ ὁ λόγος, ἀλλ’ ὑποθεῖς τι ἢ ὡς παρὰ τοῦ ἀντιδίκου ἢ ὡς ἐκ τοῦ πράγματος ἀποκρίνηται πρὸς αὐτόν, ὥσπερ δύο ἀντιλεγόμενα πρόσωπα μιμούμενος [. . .] ἔχει δὲ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ κάλλος καὶ ἐνέργειαν.
- 8 Hermogenes, *On Types of Style*, 2.1.1–6, ed. Patillon, 126–8; Longinos, *On the Sublime*, § 18.1–2 ed. Russell, 27.24–26. 28.3. Cf. Gotteland, ‘Du discours au dialogue’, 100–2.
- 9 Compare Gotteland, ‘Du discours au dialogue’, 103–4.
- 10 Pseudo-Demetrios, *On Style*, § 227 (64): πλεῖστον δ’ ἐχέτω τὸ ἠθικὸν ἢ ἐπιστολή, ὥσπερ καὶ ὁ διάλογος: σχεδὸν γὰρ εἰκόνα ἑκαστος τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς γράφει τὴν ἐπιστολήν. καὶ ἔστι μὲν καὶ ἐξ ἄλλου λόγου παντὸς ἰδεῖν τὸ ἦθος τοῦ γράφοντος, ἐξ οὐδενὸς δὲ οὕτως ὡς ἐπιστολῆς; trans. Innes, 480–1 (my italics).
- 11 Gaul, ‘Rising Elites and Institutionalization’, 259–69; idem, ‘Letter in the *Theatron*’, both with further literature.
- 12 E.g. Agapitos, *Narrative Structure*, 159–76.
- 13 The layout of dialogues in manuscripts has not yet received much attention. On changes of speakers in manuscripts of Aristophanes, see Lowe, ‘Manuscript Evidence’.
- 14 Bourbouhakis, ‘Rhetoric and Performance’; Gaul, ‘Performative Reading’.
- 15 Such questions are also raised by Gotteland, ‘Du discours au dialogue’, 94–7. Compare Korenjak, *Publikum und Redner*, 29—‘das kaiserzeitliche Drama wird oft

- überhaupt nur von einem einzigen Schauspieler vorgetragen' – and Schmid, *Atticismus*, 1:40–1 n. 40.
- 16 E.g. Halliwell, *Aesthetics of Mimesis*.
- 17 Angelon, *Imperial Ideology*, 172–7 and idem, 'Imperial Panegyric as Advice Literature', 58–63. On the function of anticipating counter-arguments, see Gotteland, 'Du discours au dialogue', 102–3.
- 18 Maximos Planoudes, *Imperial Oration*, 1288–96, 1312–19, ed. Westerink (my italics): εἰ τοίνυν ἐγὼ μὲν ταῦτα λέγω, ἕτερος δ' ἀναστὰς φήσει μὴ οὕτως ὀφείλιν ταῦτ' εἶναι καὶ γίγνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ δεῖν τοὺς μὲν ἄνδρας ἀριθμὸν ἄλλως πληροῦν, τὴν δ' ἵππον ἀρκοῦσαν ἀποδιδόναι χρεῖαν τὸ μὴ ποσὶ τῆς γῆς ψαύειν τὸν ἐπιβαίνοντα, ὥσπερ εἰ ὀρνεῖς γενέσθαι ἐπεθυμήσαμεν, τὰ δ' ὅπλα φεύγειν, ἐνδύματα γὰρ σκληρότερα καὶ τοῖς ἀπαλώτερον ζῆν αἰρουμένοις ἀσύμφορα, τὰς δὲ τριήρεις ἑὰν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐρμάτων κατασπαῖναι (τί γὰρ δεῖ τῆς ἐν θαλάττῃ πορείας; οὐ γὰρ ἄλλος Αἰήτης πάλιν καὶ χρῦσειον δέρας, ἵνα δηλαδὴ καὶ ἡμεῖς Ἀργοναῦται γενώμεθα) [. . .] εἰ ταῦτα παρ' ἑκατέρων ἡμῶν λέγεται, τίνι σε προσθέσθαι βούλεσθαι φήσομεν, βασιλεῦ; ἢ κἂν μὴ νῦν λέγεις, ἀλλ' ἐπαισθάνονθαί γε πάντες ὥς εἰς ἐμὲ βλέπεις καὶ ἀποδέχῃ τὰ κατὰ νοῦν ἄντικρυς σοι φεγγόμενον [. . .] ἐτέρωθεν δ' ἀναστὰς ἕτερος πάλιν ἀνέκρουσεν· 'εἴτ' οὐκ ἀκούεις' φησὶ 'τοῦ προφήτου Δαυίδ, ἄνδρὸς πολὺ παρὰ πᾶσι τὸ κλέος ἔχοντος, ὃς καίτοι βασιλεὺς ὢν "οὐκ ἐν τῇ δυναστείᾳ τοῦ ἵππου θελήσει" φησὶ "κύριος οὐδὲ ἐν ταῖς κνήμαις τοῦ ἀνδρὸς εὐδοκεῖ", καὶ αὖθις "οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ τόφῳ μου ἐλπῶ καὶ ἡ ῥομφαία μου οὐ σώσει με"; – εὐδαιμονοίης; καλῶς με ἀνέμνησας τοῦ Δαυίδ. εἴτ' οὐκ ἀκούεις, ὃ οὗτος, καὶ σὺ τῆς κατ' αὐτὸν ἱστορίας, ὥς ἄνδρες ἦσαν ἅμφ' αὐτὸν δυνατοὶ καὶ ὅπλοις ὠχυρωμένοι καὶ τοιοῦτοι οἵοι μόνοι καὶ τρεῖς ὄλην φάλαγγα ῥῆξαι;
- 19 Angelon, *Imperial Ideology*, 176–7.
- 20 For full context and ramifications, cf. Gaul, *Thomas Magistros*, 66–87.
- 21 Nikephoros Choumnos, *Oration on Justice*, ed. Boissonade, 167–9: *ἄνθρωπε, τί φής; ἐξ ἀδικίας θησαυρίσας καὶ κακῶς ἀποθέμενος τῇ ψυχῇ λέγεις· 'ἔχεις πολλὰ ἀγαθὰ'; [. . .] καὶ πειθέτω σε Παῦλος, πειθέτω σε καὶ Δαυίδ, ὁ μὲν λέγων 'ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὴν ἀδικίαν μισεῖ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ψυχὴν' [Ps 10:6], Παῦλος δ' ὅτι 'τὸ ἔργον ἡμῶν ἕκαστον ὁποῖόν ἐστι δοκιμάσει τὸ πῦρ' [~ 1Cor 3:13]. [. . .] οὐ τοῖς ἐν γειτόνων ἐπιβουλεύεις μόνον, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ τοῖς μακρόθεν ἐπιτηδᾶς, καὶ οὐ τοῦ πλησίον μόνον, ἀλλ' ἤδη καὶ τῶν πόρρω κατεξανίστασαι, ἀρπάζων ἀρπάγματα, ψυχὰς κατεσθίων, τοῖς ἥττον δυναμένοις χαλεπὸς τις ἐπιφυρόμενος, ἀτελαῶνων κτημάτων, ἀτελαῶνων οἰκῶν, χρημάτων ἀποστερῶν, ἑτεροίων πραγμάτων [. . .] καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὁ ἰσχυρὸς σὺ καὶ μέγας, ὃ καὶ περιουσία δυνάμεως παρρησίας βιάζεσθαι.*
- 22 Choumnos, *Oration on Justice*, ed. Boissonade, 169–70 (my italics): οἱ δ' ἄλλως πλεονεκτικοὶ καὶ περιττοὶ μὲν τὸν πλοῦτον, περιττοὶ δὲ τὴν ἀπλησίαν [. . .] κύκλῳ βάλλουσι περὶ τὸν πτωχὸν διώροφα καὶ τριώροφα, ἀφειδῶς ἀναλίσκοντες, καὶ πολιορκοῦσι τὸν τρόπον τοῦτον, ἐκπορθῆσαι σπουδάζοντες [. . .] καὶ ἡ ἀπολογία σεμνὴ· 'δυσχεραίνων γὰρ ἦν' φασὶν 'ὑβριζόμενος.' [. . .] καὶ περισκοπεῖται τὴν οἰκίαν ἐξ ἧς ἐκεῖνον ἀπήλασεν· εἴθ' ὥς πενιχρᾶς καὶ φαύλης καταγελᾶ καὶ διαβάλλει τὴν ἐκεῖνου καρτερίαν, 'εἰ γὰρ λαμπρὰν εἶχε' λέγων, 'εἰ δ' ἄβρῶς ἡσκημένην; εἰ δὲ πολυτελῆ; καὶ πονηρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀποκαλεῖ, καὶ ὥς ἀπηλλάγημεν' φησὶν 'ἐνὸς τῶν κακῶν.'
- 23 Choumnos, *Oration on Justice*, 170: τί λέγεις; πονηρὸς ἐκεῖνος; κακοποιὸς ἐκεῖνος; ὁ μὴδὲν ἀδικῶν; ὁ τρέμων; ὁ μὴδὲ τολμῶν ἄνω βλέπων πρὸς τὰς σᾶς ἐντέχνους κατασκευάς; ὁ πολιορκούμενος; ὁ κατακεντούμενος; ὁ πάντα πάσχων καὶ καρτερῶν; κακοῦ δὲ τίνος ἀπηλλάγη; [. . .].
- 24 Choumnos, *Monody for Theoleptos*, ed. Boissonade, 186: ἀγῶμεν εἰς μέσον. There is further, if indirect, evidence for a theatrical performance in Nikephoros Gregoras's *Letter*, 62.4–8, addressed to Nikephoros Choumnos: 'Least of all I would say that that one [Theoleptos] should have acquired any other encomiast of all than you alone – and indeed he acquired you! – but would especially say that you of all should have taken up the task of fitting together that one's life and to show forth a *theatron* of your

marvellous voice' (πάντων μὲν οὖν ἥκιστα φαῖν ἂν ἔγωγε χρῆναι τυχεῖν ἐπαινέτου τινὸς τῶν ἀπάντων ἐκείνου ἐτέρου ἢ σοῦ γε καὶ μόνου—καὶ μέντοι καὶ τέτυχθε—σὲ δὲ πάντων μάλιστα τὸν ἐκείνου βίον ἀρμόττειν ἀνειληφέναι καὶ θέατρον τῆς θαυμασίας σοῦ γλωττῆς ἐνδείξασθαι). The term *theatron*, ostensibly referring to Choumnos's display of learning, is almost certainly a double entendre.

- 25 Choumnos, *Monody for Theoleptos*, 204–5, ed. Boissonade: καὶ ὃς μετὰ γενναίου καὶ ἀπεριτρίπτου φρονήματος· 'οὐ περὶ τούτων χρεία νῦν, βασιλεῦ, οὐτ' ἐρωτᾶσθαι με νῦν, οὐτ' ἀποκρίνεσθαι· ἀλλ' οὐ γε χάριν ἤχθημεν καὶ τῷ σῷ παρέστημεν βήματι.' καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς· 'τίνος δὴ λέγεις τούτου;' καὶ ὃς· 'ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ' φησί, 'καὶ τῆς ὀρθῆς ὁμολογίας τῆς παρ' αὐτοῦ δοθείσης ἡμῖν.' – 'τί δέ σοι δοκοῦμεν τυγχάνειν ἡμεῖς; οὐχὶ Χριστιανοί; καὶ μὴν, εἴ γε βούλει, καὶ ὅρκους ἂν πιστωσάμεθα Χριστιανούς τυγχάνειν ἡμᾶς.' ὁ δέ· 'οὐχ ὅρκους καὶ λόγους, ἔργοις δὲ καὶ πράγμασι χρή πιστοῦσθαι τὴν ἀλήθειαν.' – 'τί δέ σῷ' φησιν 'ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῶν ἔχεις ἡμῶν καταγνοῦς'; καὶ ὁ τῆς ἀληθείας αὐθις μετ' ἀκαταπλήκτου τῆς παρρησίας 'ὅτι' φησί 'τὰς ἱερὰς γραφὰς διαστρέφοντες.' καὶ ὁ βασιλεὺς θυμοῦ καὶ ὀργῆς εὐθὺς ἐμπλησθεὶς 'τὰς ἱερὰς γραφὰς' ἐξεβόησε, 'τὰς ἱερὰς ἡμεῖς.' καὶ τοῦτο πολλάκις τῷ θυμῷ ὑπερξέσας.
- 26 E.g. Choumnos, *Monody for Theoleptos*, 197–8, 208, 210–11, 218–19.
- 27 Ševčenko, 'Alexios Makrembolites'; for the socio-historical background, see Malatras, 'Social Aspects'.
- 28 On the historical oration, see De Vries-van der Velden, *L'Élite byzantine*, 258–60.
- 29 This refers to the panic that made the Byzantine soldiers jump into the waters of the Golden Horn, where they drowned miserably, being pulled down by their armour; see Makrembolites, *Historical Oration*, § 12, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 156.9–14. § 14, 157.25–158.3.
- 30 Makrembolites, *Historical Oration*, §§ 11–12, ed. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, 153.21–154.8: [. . .] ἀλλά—βαβαί—πῶς ἂν τὰ τῆς ἀποστρέφου τύχης Ῥωμαίων καὶ τῶν δυστυχῶν ἐλπίδων αὐτῶν ἐκτραγωδήσαμεν τὴν ἀπόπτωσιν; ἢ πῶς ἀδακρυτὴ τὴν τοῦ γενομένου μνήμην ἐνέγκω;

Ο ΔΙΑΠΟΡΩΝ ὦ τῆς αἰφνιδίου μεταβολῆς, οἶα τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς εἶδον οἱ θεασάμενοι καὶ αἱ καρδίαι αὐτῶν οὐκ ἐρράγησαν. ὦ τῆς συμφορᾶς, τίς ποτε ἄρα θνητὸν τοιαύτην ἐν ἀκαρεῖ εἶδεν ἀλλοίωσιν; τίς ὑποχθόνιος δαίμων Ῥωμαίων ἐβάσκηκε τὴν ζωὴν καὶ τὴν δόξαν αὐτῶν ὥς λέων ἀφῆρπασε; τίς ἀποτρόπαιος ἄνεμος, βίαιόν τι πνεύσας καὶ φοβερόν, τὸν ἐπὶ κεφαλῇ αὐτῶν ἀνάπτοντα λύχνον εὐθέως ἀπέσβεσε καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν ἀτιμίας καὶ αἰσχύνης καὶ κατηφείας ἐπλήρωσε; τίνες ἐκ πυρὸς αἰθερίου σπινθήρες τὴν ὀπτικήν τούτων ἀπέσβεσαν δύναμιν καὶ ὥς χέρσον τὴν ὑγρὰν ἐλογίζοντο, καὶ τὰς φερούσας αὐτοὺς μακρὰς νῆας ὥς ὅφεις ἰοβόλους ὑπώπτευν; τίς τελχίν φθονερὸς καὶ μικρόθυμος τὰς χρηστὰς αὐτῶν ἐλπίδας ἐξάπινα προρρίζους ἀνέσπασε καὶ εἰς τούναντίον μετήμειψε; ποῖον ἄρα ὕδαϊον δαιμόνιον τὰς σφῶν πανηγύρεις καὶ τὰς ἐορτὰς εἰς πένθος ἔστρεψε καὶ τὸν κοπετὸν τῶν Λατίνων εἰς εὐφροσύνην καὶ ἀγαλλίασιν;

ΘΕΜΙΣ ἐγώ, φησὶν ἡ Θέμις, τουτὶ τὸ παράδοξον ἀτιμασθεῖσα πεποίηκα· ἐμε γάρ ἔθνος ἅπαν ὥς θεὸν καὶ σέβεται καὶ τιμᾷ, καὶ ὕψος ἐξ ἐμοῦ λαμβάνει καὶ πλατυσμόν. [. . .]

- 31 Ed. de Boor, 169.10–189.15; trans. Fisher, 80–104. The passage de Boor, 172.19–182.9 assumes proper dialogical format.
- 32 Scholarship on Philes is not as advanced as it should be: among recent notable pieces, see Pietsch-Braounou, *Beseelte Bilder*; Brooks, 'Poetry and Female Patronage'.
- 33 Philes, *Monody*, vv. 596–7, ed. Miller, 1:414: οὐκοῦν ἐπ' αὐτῆς τῆς σοροῦ τοῦ δεσπότη | τάδε ξέειν δίδωμι τοῖς ἐρμολύφοις.

- 34 Philes, *Monody*, vv. 6–10, ed. Miller, 1:389: Τίς, εἰπέ μοι, θάλαμος εὐτύχηκέ σε; | Τίς ἄκροατής, εἰ λαλεῖς, πάρεστί σοι; | Τίς οἰκέτης ἄγοντι ῥαστώνης χρόνον; | Τίνας παραμένοντας ἐκτίθω φίλους; | Φύλαξ δέ σοι τίς εἰ γε καθεύδειν θέλεις; For direct-speech *thrēnoi* and speech-frame formulas in Michael Psellos's Iambic Verses on the Death of Skleraina cf. Agapitos, 'Public and Private Death', 568–9.
- 35 Philes, *Monody*, vv. 114–19, ed. Miller, 1:393–4 (my italics): Ἐχρῆν μὲν ἡμᾶς μηδαμῶς σε δακρύνειν | Ἐξ ἐσπέρας ἄντικρυς εἰς φῶς ἡγμένον, | Καὶ ζῶντα καλῶς καὶ θεῶ συνημμένον | Ἐπεὶ δὲ πενθεῖν ἐκβιάζεις τὴν φύσιν | Ἀρμόζομαι δὴ πατρικῶν θρήνων μέλος, | Ὡ σκύμνε καὶ παῖ καὶ νεοττὲ δεσπότη . . .
- 36 Philes, *Monody*, vv. 239–43, 316–17, ed. Miller, 1:399. 402 (my italics): Πῶς οὖν ἐπὶ σοὶ μὴ σπαράξω τὴν κόμην; | Πῶς μὴ δὲ τοῖς ὄνυξι ῥήξω τὰς γνάθους; | Δεῖ γάρ με κινρᾶν τὰς ῥοὰς τῶν δακρύνων | Ἐρυθροβαφεὶ συμφορᾷ σπαραγμάτων | Ἠγάπησα δ' ἂν εἶπερ ἦν μοι τεκνίον | Ἡ χαλκὸς ἢ σίδηρος ἢ δρυὶς τὴν φύσιν [. . .] Φεῦ, φεῦ, θανάτω συσθεθεῖσα τοῖς πόνοις | Καὶ λειποθυμῶ καὶ λαλεῖν οὐ δύναμαι.
- 37 Philes, *Monody*, vv. 318–24, 417, ed. Miller, 1:402. 407: Εἰτά σε μὲν προὔθηκε νεκρὸν ὁ χρόνος | Θρηνεῖ δὲ πατὴρ καὶ τεκοῦσα δακρύνει | Πενθεῖ δὲ καὶ πᾶν τὸ προσήκον, ὥς θέμις, | Μελαμβαφεῖς χιτῶνας ἡμφιεσμένοι. | Ὁ παῖς δὲ μετρεῖ τὰς λαβὰς τῶν δακρύνων | Ποθῶν ἀτεχνῶς καὶ τελευτήσαντά σε, | Ὡ σύγγονε, ζῆν [*scripsi*], κἂν ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἡρπάγης [. . .] Νῦν δὴ σιωπῶ κατ' ἐμμαντόν σε κλάων.
- 38 Philes, *Monody*, vv. 418–22, 518–21, ed. Miller, 1:407. 411: Κἂν ἢ κτίσις ἅπασα πενθεῖν ἰσχύῃ, | Κἂν οἱ βασιλεῖς εὐπορῶσι δακρύνων, | Κἂν ἡ βασιλὶς δυσφορῇ πρὸς τὸν πόνον, | Κἂν ἡ πρὸ μικροῦ βασιλίσσα δακρύνω, | Κἂν ζῶν ὁ πατὴρ οὐ δοκῇ μοι φῶς βλέπειν [. . .] Ἐγὼ δὲ σιγῶ κἂν προήχθην τοῖς πόνοις | Παθοῦσα δεινῶν συμφορῶν ἀμετρίαν | Ἀλλὰ γε μικροῦ πᾶσά με θρηνεῖ κτίσις | Παγκοσμίου χάριτος ἐστερημένην.
- 39 Barker, 'Late Byzantine Thessalonike', 9–14.
- 40 Philes, *Dialogue between Man and Soul*, vv. 175–85, ed. Miller, 1:427:

Η ΨΥΧΗ [. . .] Πλὴν ἀλλὰ δεῦρο πρὸς ἡμᾶς, γύνα φιλότατη, δεῦρο, | Καὶ ζῶσα φθέρξει καθαρῶς καὶ παραμύθησαί μοι | Τὸν ἄνδρα τὸν ὁμόνυχον εἰ θανατῶντα βλέπεις. | Ἄρα συνήκας τῆς φωνῆς, ἥ καὶ λουιτὴν προσθήσω; | Δοκῶ γὰρ ἐξυπνίζειν σε μηδὲν ἀγανακτῶσαν, | Ἐπεὶ μοι συνεγίνωσκες εἴ τι καὶ πρὶν ἀτόλμως.

Η ΣΥΣΥΓΓΟΣ Τί τοῦτο, φιλοσώματε; τί τοῦτο, μικρολόγε; | Τί με καλεῖς ἐπὶ τὸν χοῦν ἀπὸ τῶν οὐρανίων; | Τί με πρὸς σῶμα χαμερπὲς ὀτρύνεις ἀναστρέφειν; | Τί πρὸς τὸ σκότος τῶν παθῶν ἀπὸ φωτὸς ἀδύτου; | Τί πρὸς τὸ δεσποτήριον ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθερίας; [. . .]

- 41 Philes, *Dramatic Ethopoeia*, vv. 251–3, ed. Miller, 1:143–84:

ΝΟΥΣ [. . .] Τῶν ἀρετῶν ὁ δίφορος ἐνθάδε τρέχει | Τὸν ἄνδρα τιμῶν καὶ κροτεῖν τοῦτον θέλων. / Αἱ ἀρεταὶ τί τοῦτο, Νοῦ; τί τοῦτο, Φιλῆ, τὸ θράσος; . . . / vv. 272–3: ΝΟΥΣ . . . Πλέξατε γοῦν στέφανον αὐτῷ χαρίτων | Ἐκ τῶν παρ' ὑμῖν οὐρανοδρόσων ῥόδων. [*The four cardinal virtues sing their praises*] vv. 302–8: ΝΟΥΣ Βαβαί, πάλιν ἄλλος με ταράττει κτύπος | Ἴδου γὰρ ἐσμός παρθενικὸς εἰσρέει . . . | Ὁ γὰρ . . . | Φοιτᾷ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξ Ἐδέμ τινος νέας | Ἀκηράτων στέφανον ἀνθρώπων φέρων. [*The eight minor virtues sing their praises*] / vv. 365–8: ΦΙΛΗΣ Ὡ Νοῦ, πάλιν πρόελθε καὶ δίδασκέ με, | Μᾶλλον δε τὴν αἴσθησιν ἐγκαίνιζέ μοι. | Καὶ γὰρ ὁ σεμνὸς ὄρμαθός τῶν παρθένων, | Οἷς εὐστόχως εἶρηκεν, ἐξέπληξέ με. . .

- 42 Gaul, 'Patridge's Purple Stockings', 73–85; Macrides, Munitiz and Angelov, *Pseudo-Kodinos*, 1–20, 280–9.
- 43 Gaul, 'Patridge's Purple Stockings', 86–96.

- 44 Nikephoros Gregoras, *Roman History*, 11.10, ed. Schopen, 555.20–556.14: [. . .] ἀλλ’ οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν ἡλέγχθη [i.e. Barlaam] πίθηκος ὢν καὶ πρὸς τῶν Βυζαντίων ὀλίγου δέω λέγειν ἀπάντων κατέγνωσται καὶ διακεκωμῶδηται πάντοτε σοφῶδρα περιφανῶς. τὸ δ’ ὅπως, ἔξεστιν ἀκοῦειν τοῖς βουλομένοις ἐντυγχάνειν τῷ διαλόγῳ, ὃν ἐγὼ ταῖς τῶν πλείστων καὶ σοφωτέρων δεήσεσιν εἷζας ξυγγέγραφα, πλατύτερον πάντα διεξελθὼν ἐν αὐτῷ. τοῦτου δ’ ἡ μὲν ἐπιγραφὴ, Φλωρέντιος, ἡ περὶ σοφίας· ἡ δ’ ἀρχή· [. . .]—πέπλασται γὰρ ἐν τῷ διαλόγῳ καὶ ἡλλοίωται ἡμῖν τὰ τε τῶν προσώπων καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ὀνόματα· καὶ ἀντὶ μὲν Βυζαντίων ἢ τῶν Ἀθηναίων εἰσάγεται πόλις· ἀντὶ δὲ τῶν Ῥωμαϊκῶν ἡγεμόνων Ἡρακλεῖδαι καὶ Κεκροπίδαι· ἀντὶ δὲ Νικηφόρου Νικαγόρας· καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς δῆλα τοῖς συνετῶς ὁρῶσιν. [. . .]
- 45 Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, *scholion* (53): ‘One must know that this present dialogue has changed the names of the cities and of those who dialogise in it: for it calls the city of Byzantium Athens; the writer and father of the dialogue [= Nikephoros Gregoras himself] Nikagoras; the monk Barlaam Xenophanes son of Thrasymachos; one of the Latin Minor Friars, son of some seaman, Xenokrates; the *megas logothetēs* Metochites, Metodoros; those around the elder emperor Andronikos, Kekropides; those around the younger emperor Andronikos, Herakleides; yet Phlorentius one of those present and heard in the discourse’ (ιστέον ὅτι ὁ προκείμενος οὗτος διάλογος ἐνηλλαγμένα ἔχει τῶν τε πόλεων καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ διαλεγομένων τὰ ὀνόματα· Ἀθήνας μὲν γὰρ ὀνομάζει τὸ Βυζάντιον, Νικαγόραν δὲ τὸν συγγραφέα καὶ πατέρα τοῦ διαλόγου, Ξενοφάνην δὲ Θρασυμάχου τὸν μοναχὸν Βαρλαάμ, Ξενοκράτην δὲ Λατῖνον τινὰ ἐκ τῶν Φρερίων υἱὸν Ναυτικοῦ τινος, Μητροδόωρον δὲ τὸν μέγαν λογοθέτην τὸν Μετοχίτην, Κεκροπίδας δὲ τοὺς περὶ τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ γηραιοῦ βασιλέως, Ἡρακλείδας δὲ τοὺς περὶ τὴν βασιλείαν Ἀνδρονίκου τοῦ νέου βασιλέως, Φλωρέντιον δὲ ἄνδρα τινὰ τῶν συμπαρόντων καὶ ἀκροωμένων ἐν τῇ διαλέξει).
- 46 On the *Phlorentios*, see also Manolova’s chapter below.
- 47 The *prosōpa* otherwise are: Leo Sophianos; Philotheos himself; Merkourios; Barlaam of Calabria; Gregory Palamas; Gregory Akindynos; Nikephoros Gregoras; Theodore Dexios; Isaac Gregory; Theodore Atouemes; John VI (Kantakouzenos) = *basileus*; Kallistos I patriarch of Constantinople = *patriarch*.
- 48 Haploucheir, *Dramation*, ed. Leone.
- 49 Gaul, ‘Moschopoulos, Lopadiotes, Phrankopoulos (?)’, *Magistros*’.
- 50 On this, see Gaul, *Thomas Magistros*, 260.
- 51 Bianconi, ‘Frammento escorialense’; idem, ‘Giovanni Catrario’; de Andrés, Irigoin and Hörandner, ‘Johannes Katreas’.
- 52 This does not technically exclude the option of more speakers or any props (e.g. pictures of the Virtues) involved but, in the context of Byzantine rhetorical *theatron*, this does not seem very likely.
- 53 Beyer, ‘Erzählung des Matthaios’.
- 54 Above, Cameron and Gaul, ‘Introduction’, i.
- 55 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit, and Sidéridès, 3:11.35–12.4: ΠΑΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ οὕτως ἀνάγκη πανταχοῦ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἀκολουθεῖν; ἢ δεῖ που καὶ νεωτερίζειν· αὐτοὶ γοῦν ἐν τοῖς ἀναγκαιοτέροις καινοτομοῦντες, καὶ τὰ τοῖς πατράσι δόξαντα ἀτιμάζοντες, οὐδὲν ἡγεῖσθε πράττειν δεινόν· καὶ τί μὲν ἐφρόνουν οἱ πρὸ ἐξαικοσίων ἐτῶν, ἐξετάζειν περὶ αὐτοῦ, τί δὲ ἐδόκει τοῖς ἐξ ἐκείνων τῶν χρόνων ἄχρι καὶ νῦν πατράσιν ἡμῶν, περὶ ὧν ἐφρόνουν οἱ ἀρχαιότεροι, συνορᾶν οὐ βούλεσθε, ὥς αὐτοὶ γε ὄντες βελτίους πάντων κριταί.

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14 Nikephoros Gregoras's *Philomathes and Phlorentios*

*Divna Manolova**

As he addressed his students, the philosopher and rhetorician Michael Psellos (1018–1078) wrote that

[t]he philosopher must be a man of all sorts (παντοδαπὸν) and strive not only to know sciences and arts whose natural product is wisdom and understanding, but also to study history, to be keen on geography, and to have some expertise in the rest of ‘music’, by which I mean not just music making with physical instrument but all word-based history and culture and, in a word, the whole complex of deep and broad learning (καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀπλῶς εὐμάθειάν τε καὶ πολυμαθειαν).¹

Thus, Psellos related philosophy, *eumatheia* or ‘deep learning’, and *polymatheia* or mastery of wide-ranging knowledge. In the words of John Duffy, ‘his (i.e. Psellos’) idea of what characterises a philosopher seems to be summed up in the single word *polymatheia*’.² One finds a similar understanding of philosophy in the letters of Michael Italikos (c. 1090?–before 1157) who employed the concept of *to philomathes* in order to justify the wide range of his own intellectual pursuits.³ The idea of the philosopher as a lover of learning and master of knowledge persisted in the early Palaiologan period as well. For instance, Theodore Metochites (1270–1332), in his poem addressed to Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos, postulated obtaining wisdom in this life as his personal goal as well as that of ‘all mortal men with prudent, resolute minds’.⁴ Metochites envisaged his collection of philosophical essays, the so-called *Semeioseis gnomikai*, as a ‘witness to the strength of [his] mind and erudition (πολυμαθία)’.⁵ Moreover, he presented the composition of this work as motivated by the duty to share one’s knowledge, according to his declaration in his *Essay* 111 on the study of history, namely that ‘he who is an intellectual should not only use for himself the erudition and experience (πολυμαθία καὶ πείρα) of the ancients but should share it’.⁶ Finally, Metochites modelled the *Semeioseis* as well as his own authorial *persona* on Plutarch and his œuvre, the latter being models of *polymatheia* themselves. Thus, in his *Essay* 71, ‘On Plutarch’, Metochites remarked that the latter’s treatise on Homer ‘demonstrates . . . Plutarch’s abundance of wisdom, his wide learning concerning all things (τῆς περὶ πάντα πολυμαθίας), his perspicacity and the richness of his mind, all the

many beautiful treasures that he stored up, showing that the man lacked for nothing'.⁷ Among the next generation of scholars, Metochites's disciple Nikephoros Gregoras commented on the relation between *philomatheia* and philosophy in at least three of his philosophical texts, namely in his *Commentary on Synesios's On Dreams*, in his *First Solution to a Philosophical Problem* addressed to Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina and, finally, in his Platonising dialogue *Philomathes*.

In the 1330s, Nikephoros Gregoras (c. summer 1293/June 1294–1358/1361),⁸ a writer of rhetorical, hagiographical, historiographical, astronomical, philosophical and theological works, composed two Platonising dialogues entitled *Philomathes, or, On Arrogant People* and *Phlorentios, or, On Wisdom*. Gregoras has also been the suggested author of three anonymous early fourteenth-century dialogues, namely *Hermippos, or, On Astrology*, *Hermodotos, or, On Beauty* and *Mousokles, or, On the Best Life*,⁹ which have been attributed alternatively to John Katrones¹⁰ or John Zacharias.¹¹ Based on his knowledge of Plato and the composition of dialogues, and on the dating of one of the earliest manuscript witnesses of the pseudo-Psellian *Timotheos, or, On Demons*, Gautier suggested that Gregoras could be its author as well, though there is not enough evidence to prove the identification.¹²

In addition to his other works, notably to his *Oration Before Andronikos II, Whose Pretext Is the Emperor's Love for Plato*,¹³ the two dialogues, *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios*, illustrate Gregoras's familiarity with Plato's thought. It is not by chance that Nicholas Kabasilas Chamaëtos (c. 1322/23–after 1391)¹⁴ wrote a short polemical essay against Gregoras in which he mocked the latter for his interest in Plato and for his effort to emulate his philosophical and rhetorical authority.¹⁵

While editions and studies of Byzantine philosophical texts have increased in number since the middle of the twentieth century, the history of the philosophical dialogue in Byzantium remains to be written.¹⁶ Very generally speaking, Byzantine philosophical dialogue was most often a prose dialogue on a philosophical subject, often Platonising at least with respect to its literary features. Gregoras was certainly not the only Byzantine author to attempt writing a philosophical dialogue. Worth mentioning are Theodore Prodromos's (c. 1100–1156/1158 or c. 1170) *Xenedemos, or, Predicables* which polemicises against Porphyry's *Eisagoge*,¹⁷ the twelfth-century *Charidemos, or, On Beauty* and Nikephoros Blemmydes's (1197–1269) *On the Terminus of Man's Life* (written between 1242–1249 or in the 1250s as a treatise in dialogue form arguing against the predetermination of the time of one's death).¹⁸ In addition, one ought to mention that Gregoras employed the Platonising dialogical form also in his still unpublished *Second Antirrhetics* which includes two nested dialogical narratives embedded within the frame of the main discussion between Gregoras and his interlocutor Agathangelos (Books I to V and VII to X). Namely, Book VI contains a fictitious Platonising dialogue between Kleodemos and Protagoras whose topic is, in turn, a conversation between Gregoras and John Kantakouzenos.¹⁹

It has been stated that the Platonising dialogue was considered particularly suitable for polemical purposes in Byzantium and quite often served as a literary vehicle for delivering theological content as opposed to philosophical one.²⁰ Leaving

the complexities of distinguishing between Byzantine philosophical and theological discourses aside,²¹ it is noteworthy that Gregoras's *Phlorentios* has served as an example both for a philosophical text and for Byzantine polemic. Its philosophical reading is based, among other things, on the fact that it engages critically with the inconsistencies of Aristotle's natural philosophy,²² while the polemical interpretation²³ approached it as a historical source for the intellectual competition with regard to astronomy, harmonics and philosophy between Gregoras and Barlaam of Calabria (c. 1290–1348).²⁴ That is, in the second case, the *Phlorentios* has been read as a report of a public debate between the two *erudits* which allegedly took place at the palace of the *megas domestikos* John Kantakouzenos, the future emperor John VI,²⁵ probably during the winter of 1331–1332.²⁶

Irrespective of their historical accuracy, both *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios* have been discussed in scholarship from the 1970s and 1980s chiefly as polemical texts.²⁷ Thus, they have been related to a number of other works by Gregoras composed in the context of his rivalry with Barlaam, such as Gregoras's *Response to Those who Claim that There Is No Humility Among Men*, better-known as *Antilogia*, a number of Gregoras's letters dealing with astronomical matters,²⁸ his calculations of lunar and solar eclipses, such as the solar eclipse of 14 May 1333,²⁹ as well as parts of his *Roman History*. It is not by chance, then, that in the secondary literature from this period written in French and Italian, the three texts (*Antilogia*, *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios*) are usually referred to as pamphlets.³⁰ That is, they were grouped together as examples of a polemic and, thus, the differences between a short philosophical essay such as the *Antilogia* and a Platonising philosophical dialogue such as *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios* were obscured. Moreover, it has been pointed out that both dialogues discuss the theme of pride and insolence, thus constructing an image of the adversary, which borrows the main characteristics of the sophist as described by Plato and the pseudo-philosopher one finds in Lucianic dialogues.³¹ In addition, Ševčenko and Leone have underlined that in depicting his adversary, Gregoras employed a number of *topoi* traditional for the Byzantine invective and, moreover, parallel to the criticism Gregoras's mentor Theodore Metochites (1270–1332)³² launched against the philosophical endeavours of his contemporary Nikephoros Choumnos.³³

The perspective of modern scholarship on the *Phlorentios*, however, has shifted. It has become less interested in evaluating the dialogue as historical evidence for an actual public debate between Barlaam and Gregoras or for the polemic between them in general. Instead, the *Phlorentios* has been approached as a substantial philosophical discussion whose adversarial tone targets not simply Barlaam the Calabrian, but in some respects, mankind's cognitive capacity at large.³⁴ The *Philomathes*, however, still remains neglected and in a need of a modern commentary.³⁵

In the present essay, with respect to the two established readings of Gregoras's dialogues, namely, as polemical pamphlets and as philosophical treatises in dialogic form, I suggest that each of the two readings restricts their complexity and obscures the relevance of their dialogical nature.³⁶ As I examine the ways in which Gregoras's understanding of philosophy entails *philomatheia*, I propose a joint

reading of *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios* through this key. That is, I argue that in addition to displaying Gregoras's love for learning and erudition, the two dialogues serve as examples of how one should correctly pursue knowledge (*Philomathes*) and of what knowledge is attainable and how can one demonstrate mastery of it (*Phlorentios*). Correspondingly, first, I discuss relevant passages from Gregoras's *Commentary on Synesios's On Dreams* and *First Solution* in which he elaborated on the topic of *philomatheia*. Second, I introduce *Philomathes* as the most elaborate example of Gregoras understanding of this love for learning. Finally, in order to propose a revised reading of the *Phlorentios* as a source for Gregoras's epistemological views, I address two topics it features, namely first, Gregoras's overarching criticism towards human cognition and, second, Gregoras's evaluation of the astronomical knowledge and its merit.

Philomatheia and polymatheia

Among Gregoras's philosophical works, an important place is occupied by his *Commentary on Synesios's On Dreams*³⁷ in which the theme of *philomatheia* appears twice.³⁸ The first instance is a commentary to 138A τῆς γῆς ἐνδύεται in which Gregoras quotes verbatim Plato's *Phaedo* 82b–c:

‘And no one who has not been a philosopher and who is not wholly pure when he departs, is allowed to enter into the communion of the gods, but only the lover of knowledge’.³⁹ And he (i.e. Synesios) says that the philosopher is a lover of learning since (he is) curious and inquisitive about the nature of the beings.⁴⁰

Gregoras points out that Synesios has linked *philomatheia* with philosophy and, to further elucidate the connection purportedly made by the latter and to incorporate it in the authoritative tradition, the Byzantine author supplies a Platonic reference relating the same terms.⁴¹

The *Commentary's* prefatory letter⁴² elaborates on the topic of *philomatheia* more extensively and introduces another authoritative reference, namely, Isocrates's *To Demonikos*:

For even though Isocrates said ‘if you love knowledge, you will be a master of knowledge’,⁴³ you are doing the reverse. For with regard to the first, you became, while with regard to the second, you always are. For you always love learning, your nature not being satisfied in regard to the previous (achievements).⁴⁴

Through the Isocratean quotation, Gregoras links *philomatheia* with *polymatheia*, thus adding another aspect of what characterises the philosopher in addition to the love for learning, namely, a wide-ranging knowledge. Another attribute of the lover of learning listed in the *Protheoria* is their natural dissatisfaction with what has been already achieved.⁴⁵ Importantly, in Gregoras's *First Solution*,⁴⁶ the

same feature is ascribed to *basilissa* Helene Kantakouzene Palaiologina (1333–1396),⁴⁷ daughter of John VI Kantakouzenos and wife of John V Palaiologos, to whom Gregoras dedicated his *Solutions to Philosophical Problems*, a collection of answers to her questions concerning natural philosophy. Thus, the *First Solution* references Plato's association of *philomatheia* and philosophy and endorses it as it qualifies the 'lover of learning' as an 'ambitious examiner of all things' whose wisdom, moreover, can expand and deepen:

Plato, the son of Ariston, who was raised to the highest degree with respect to philosophy, beyond all praises, through which the time graciously granted (him) great fame on account of the vigour of (his) words, he rendered the rest in a beautiful manner as well; what is more, this strength is also accordant with those who keep away from his thought; for they say that the lover of learning is exactly a philosopher. For even if it happens that the lover of learning still resides in the doorway of wisdom and has not yet set foot on the acropolis, but as he has a clear pledge as to being a 'ponderer over things in the air'⁴⁸ and over those visible and audible phenomena which earth and sky produce as seasonal, and (a pledge) to be an ambitious examiner of all things, the probable reasoning promises presently that he shall obtain that (wisdom) as well.⁴⁹

Moreover, Gregoras argues, his words are exemplified by Helene herself and her love for learning, as her soul is inclined towards *polymatheia* and prompt to discover actual knowledge and does not limit itself to what has already been achieved.⁵⁰ Moreover, Gregoras observes that through her inquiries of philosophical problems, concerning which she consults Gregoras, Helene has been convinced of the primacy of Plato's authority and of the privileged position of *philomatheia*:

Because your love for learning is a clear mirror of these words of mine, divine empress, thus, I believe, no rival discourse today would firmly object, having received their (i.e. my words) assurance. For the disposition of your soul and your inquisitive desire become the strongest, as they always incite towards *polymatheia* and allow discovery of the actual knowledge⁵¹ and to be least satisfied with the previous (achievements) only; but as they discover, in addition to other philosophical problems, more of the more sublime thoughts, they in no way cease to be invited towards my solutions and persuaded through these deeds to believe it to be true that Plato is philosophy's source and that the love of learning is declared the foundation of understanding.⁵²

My reconstruction of Gregoras's discussion of *philomatheia* and *polymatheia* on the basis of his *Commentary on Synesios's On Dreams* and *First Solution* demonstrates that, for Gregoras, the love for learning is an essential characteristic of the inquiring, that is, the philosophical mind. Gregoras derives authoritative sanction of this idea ultimately from Plato, but also from Synesios and, finally, from Isocrates, whose statement in *Oration to Demonikos* relates the concept of *philomatheia* to that of *polymatheia*, thus, justifying both the 'scientific' curiosity

and the resulting mastery of the diverse and wide-ranging knowledge the philosopher acquires. Thus, having in mind Gregoras's concern with *philomatheia* and *polymatheia*, and their relation to philosophy, in what follows I propose a reading of the dialogue *Philomathes* as an exercise in love for learning exemplified by the queries of the main narrator and as a discussion of what the lover of learning should and should not do in order to achieve wisdom.⁵³

Philomathes, or, on Arrogant People

The modern readers of the *Phlorentios* and *Philomathes* unanimously recognise their successful emulation of the genre of the Platonic dialogue both in terms of their structure and of their linguistic register.⁵⁴ The *Phlorentios*, for instance, opens with an elaborate description of the city of Athens (an alias for Constantinople) and its current political situation which delineates the setting of the debate between the interlocutors Nikagoras and Xenophanes. In both dialogues, the main narrator, the fictional Philomathes and Phlorentios, respectively, recounts events he was present at (the teaching practices of the sophists and a public dispute, respectively) and in both texts Gregoras made use of dramatic dialogical devices. Arguably, *Philomathes* is a more successful Platonic emulation as it is the only one of Gregoras dialogues in which the author did not, at least not explicitly, insert himself as an interlocutor.⁵⁵ Moreover, both dialogues employ elements of the Lucianic dialogues, as they depict the sophists or Xenophanes as boastful, vain and ignorant. It has not been discussed, however, whether Gregoras's use of the dialogical genre contributed to the creation of meaning with respect to the philosophical discussions in both works.⁵⁶ Moreover, the reading of these two dialogues as strictly polemical has diminished the role of their *skopos*, namely, *On Arrogant People* and *On Wisdom*. In Leone's reading, both dialogues were dedicated to pride, insolence and *hybris*,⁵⁷ thus neglecting the fact that the latter are criticised in the context of the human efforts of attaining knowledge.

The *Philomathes*, for instance, indeed exposes the malpractices of certain young students who are not only arrogant and presumptuous, as they boast and parade their superficial knowledge,⁵⁸ but also ignorant since they study very little of the ancient rhetoricians and favour Lucian in particular.⁵⁹ Notably, Philomathes's account evokes Aristoboulos's memory of educational practices in Calabria,⁶⁰ thus associating Barlaam's birthplace with misleading methods of obtaining knowledge and suggesting that the dialogue's invective is addressed towards Gregoras's rival. Further, Philomathes relates, the sophists who instruct these young men lack independent opinion; thus, they would attack even Plato's works.⁶¹ They are compared to barking dogs and to snails hiding in their shells,⁶² unworthy to be referred to as wise (σοφοί), since what they are, in fact, is experts in boastfulness (σοφισταὶ ἀλαζονείας) and dealers in insolence (κάπηλοι ὕβρεων).⁶³

The context of this invective, however, indicated by the name of the main narrator, is Philomathes's own love for learning and pursuit of knowledge which prompted his observations of the ways of the sophists and their students and encouraged him to seek Aristoboulos's advice on how to become a wise man.⁶⁴

Importantly, Philomathes admits that observing how the methods of the sophists have led their young disciples to become learned in a short time, he himself has been tempted to follow them.⁶⁵

In other words, what is attractive in the sophists' method is its swiftness. Thus, it is not surprising that in the final part of the dialogue, under the pretext of discussing a different topic, Philomathes recalls an episode which contextualises and explains his anxiety with respect to the time required for one to obtain wisdom. He reports having heard a song about the brevity of youth. What surprises Philomathes is that the people who heard the song reacted differently: while some fell in drunken frenzy and started dancing, others mourned their pitiful condition.⁶⁶ As Aristoboulos finds nothing new in the observation that different people perceived the same song differently, Philomathes seizes the opportunity to entreat him to share his knowledge on what causes such a difference.⁶⁷ In response, Aristoboulos expressed his admiration for Philomathes's love for learning (*philomatheia*) and obliged his inquiry.⁶⁸ Similarly, as the brevity of youth and the transience of human existence affect different people differently, faced with the rapid course of time, some of those who pursue wisdom choose the quick path to knowledge, which in turn leads them to vanity, boastfulness and *hybris*, while others, such as Philomathes, dedicate whatever limited lifetime they have entirely to learning without expecting a fast reward.

Thus, by means of criticising the educational methods of the sophists which allegedly bear resemblance to the Calabrian practices, *Philomathes* in fact addresses the existential and philosophical problem of the relationship between time and learning. While one's lifetime is limited and therefore its quick passing is experienced as a dramatic event, the love for learning, nevertheless, cannot be rushed into growing into erudition and it is impossible for the lover of learning (*philo-mathēs*) to quickly become a lover of wisdom (*philo-sophos*).

Phlorentios, *or*, On Wisdom

Philomathes warned against exercising one's *philomatheia* superficially in order to become wise as quickly as possible. Moreover, through its depiction of Philomathes's manner of learning from Aristoboulos, the dialogue sanctioned an image of the authentic 'lover of learning'. *Phlorentios, or, On Wisdom*, though engaged in a similar but, unlike *Philomathes*, overt polemic against Barlaam the Calabrian, also addressed the question as to what being wise entailed and what the limitations of human wisdom were, especially with respect to knowing the natural world.⁶⁹

Phlorentios is recognizably one of Gregoras's most substantial philosophical texts and, thus, a philosophical reading of the dialogue never fails to examine it as evidence for Gregoras's position on human knowledge of the creation. By and large in his œuvre, Gregoras described the realm of the natural phenomena and human affairs as unstable and chaotic, subdued by chance and fortune, whose influence was, however, overruled by the governance of divine forethought and justice.⁷⁰ His doubt in the ability of the human intellect to grasp the physical

phenomena and to attain knowledge of the sensible world is expressed in the *Phlorentios* as well:

For nothing among men is true, nor certain, but the human affairs are stirred and wrecked in obscure waters, as it were, and certain strong roaming mocks the human effort, 'as it tosses and stirs up and down' every strength of deliberations and as it overturns by judgement of the dice the plans established through firm decisions; and at times it brings an unexpected ending to those who await, at others, (it offers) a hand as something fortunate to those who do not expect (it). But if someone would wish to resist and fight against such randomness of the affairs, such a person would appear to me to be foolish and of certain base intelligence, which the hands of the irrational nature have brought down to enclose it at the bottom of certain obscure matter, as it is not able to understand that the resolutions of providence circumvent the deeds and the events, since they have security of (the) pre-established cause of each outcome, (cause) which we readily forget, as we avoid the thence disagreeable selfishness. But since its (i.e. the providence's) judgement was engraved on the tablet, it awaits, so to say, a season of summer and of threshing, in order to give back to those who act the crops worthy of the seeds.⁷¹

It has been stated that *Phlorentios* displays Gregoras's criticism of Aristotle's philosophy, notably of his syllogistic logic and physics.⁷² The dialogue, indeed, features Gregoras's criticism of Aristotelian epistemology which consists in an account of the discrepancies between relevant passages in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* 2.19 (in which the Stagirite posits the universals as starting points for the demonstrative deductions, necessary in order to reach scientific truth) and *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.6 (in which Aristotle denies the existence of universals or forms). Gregoras also specifically targeted *Posterior Analytics* 2.19 and problematised the process of creation of universals from particulars by the intellect; that is, he questioned the possibility for the immaterial intellect to create intelligible realities on the basis of material particulars which are constantly changing.⁷³

Within the dialogue, what has been read as Gregoras's assessment of Aristotelian philosophy is delivered in the voice of a certain Nikagoras of Herakleia, who challenges the views of both Xenophanes and Xenokrates, the first representing a Greek monk from southern Italy, while the second stands for a certain Latin friar living in Constantinople. A scholion contemporary and belonging to the *Phlorentios* provides the key to matching its 'fictitious' interlocutors to their historical counterparts and, thus, the reader is informed that Nikagoras is Gregoras's alias and Xenophanes is Barlaam's. After having pointed out that Xenophanes is not acquainted with all of Aristotle's teachings (notably with the latter's contribution to grammar, poetics and rhetoric)⁷⁴ and having listed the inconsistencies within Aristotle's exposition in the *Posterior Analytics* and in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Nikagoras faces his second interlocutor, namely Xenophanes's friend Xenokrates.⁷⁵ The change of interlocutor prompts Nikagoras to reiterate his epistemological concern: 'For I said earlier as well that the domain of no scientific

(ἐπιστημονικὸς) and categorical sentence (ἀποφαντικὸς λόγος) will be the case of things which are not stable at all, but, on the contrary, are in perpetual flux'⁷⁶ and further, 'that the ineffable provisions of providence circumvent the present affairs . . .'⁷⁷ Nikagoras's position on the possibility of knowledge with regard to the ever-changing worldly phenomena, reinforced by his criticism of the inconsistent Aristotelian argumentation, is in tune with what has been deemed a 'pervasive assumption' within Byzantine epistemological discourse, namely with the understanding that 'the nature of cognitive states . . . is dependent on the nature of the cognitive objects'.⁷⁸ Indeed, the view expressed by Nikagoras is consistent with Gregoras's overall epistemological position. Moreover, the instable and uncertain nature of the object of the so-called natural science forms also the core of Theodore Metochites's criticism against physics.⁷⁹ A distinctive feature of both Metochites's and Gregoras's intellectual agenda, however, was to reaffirm the superiority of astronomy over physics,⁸⁰ and *Phlorentios's* narrative structure provides further evidence in support of this claim.

If one considers whether and how Gregoras's philosophical ideas are enhanced by rendering them through the medium of a Platonising dialogue, one ought to note that Nikagoras's conviction, namely, that humankind is limited in grasping the truth about the natural world only through its own intellectual resources, is delivered in the context of Xenophanes's boastful claim that obtaining such knowledge is in fact an achievable goal:

NIKAGORAS: But I wonder at the wise Xenophanes, (namely) how he delves into unclear and uncertain affairs, he himself bringing firm hopes, he believes that he can prevail in every way; for we know that, when the divine providence does not assist the human acts of will and affairs, the outcome happens to be toilsome and very much the opposite of those (i.e. the acts of will and the human affairs).⁸¹

XENOPHANES: 'Do not wonder', he said, 'wise Nikagoras. For, it seems to me, you clearly do not know that it is possible to render ourselves competent to prevail or not over the things upon us.'⁸²

Consequently, Nikagoras is invited to put Xenophanes's claims to a test and he chooses to do that with the help of an astronomical question:

Come now then, after you take that astrolabe, stand in the sun and show the time, whatever it may be at present, so that, from a certain true starting point, you arrive at findings concerning the sun and the other stars, namely where each one happens to be in the zodiac, and you are able to produce clear and irrefutable demonstrations of the intrinsic reasons for their movements.⁸³

This request is described as an easy task fit for children who have just grasped the basics of astronomy. Despite being deemed elementary, thus strengthening Nikagoras's ridicule of Xenophanes's false competence, to determine the hour would in fact require, first, knowledge of the workings of the astrolabe, and second,

knowledge of the astronomical system coherent with it. Importantly, Nikagoras remarks that determining the time serves as a true starting point (ὀρυκτήριον) from which one can build further and expand on one's knowledge of the heavenly bodies and their movements. In other words, within the study of the heavenly bodies and their movements, there is at least one such thing as a true starting point, something which is not unstable, fickle and governed by fortune, and moreover, something the human intellect could grasp and obtain true knowledge of, namely, the calculation of the hour.

Nikagoras's request and Xenophanes's response to it mark a reversal in the narrative, with regard to the epistemological positions of the two interlocutors. While at first, Nikagoras stated that no human affair is true and stable and questioned Xenophanes whose opposite claim of certainty seemed preposterous, now Nikagoras gives an example of a human affair which is quite certain, namely to determine the current time with the help of an astrolabe. In what follows, Xenophanes exposes his ignorance by deeming the task something not at all accessible to humankind: 'For which man, being earthborn, could ever ascend to the sky to observe and grasp the movements of the stars, their distances and interpositions, and could communicate something clear to the others?'⁸⁴

Modern history of philosophy has understood whatever the literary person of Nikagoras claims as an expression of what was meant by Gregoras, and whatever Xenophanes–Barlaam proffers as the opposite of what Gregoras thought; thus, Xenophanes's share of the conversation serves only to help advance Nikagoras–Gregoras's arguments. Reading the *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios* as polemical texts has taught us not to trust Gregoras's account of Xenophanes–Barlaam's ignorance and, thus, it has diminished, though with some reason, the substantiality of the Xenophanian voice. Equating Nikagoras's voice with Gregoras's effectively eliminates the possibility for each and every character of the dialogue to be in fact presenting an aspect of the authorial and authoritative voice. With respect to the discussion of the limitations of human knowledge, two consequences follow. First, since Nikagoras's voice has been selected, decontextualised and read independently as the authoritative and the authentic one, its relation to Xenophanes's voice and the possibility of reading their conversation as jointly expressing Gregoras's authentic position has been obscured. Importantly, read independently, Nikagoras's epistemological stance is indeed pessimistic and sceptical. Read as a response to Xenophanes's pretention for mastering all knowledge, it serves as a reaction, a corrective and even as a moral warning against a false conception of knowledge. In my view, Nikagoras's concern with the possibility of knowledge of the natural world represents a backdrop and a premise from which Xenophanes's self-pronounced '[m]anifold and diverse' (παντοδαπὴν καὶ ποικίλην) wisdom, 'sufficient for all questions, as many and of whatever kind, that one may wish to ask',⁸⁵ can be exposed as false. In this sense, the dialogue between Nikagoras and Xenophanes communicates what knowledge and wisdom are not and advises against the advancement of impossible-to-defend claims. At the same time, however, as the example with the determination of the current time suggests, should one claim that they are all-knowledgeable, there is a method to test that, in the

context of astronomy, and, moreover, there is a true premise to start from. Had Xenophanes completed the task, he might have proven his wisdom real.

To conclude, in the present essay, I suggest, first, that neither the polemical nor the philosophical reading of Gregoras's *Philomathes* and *Phlorentios* examine their dialogical character, and second, that the philosophical reading of *Phlorentios* in particular should problematise whether and in what way the exposition of Gregoras's views on human cognition depends on its rendering in the form of a Platonic dialogue. In addition, based on Gregoras's employment of the Platonic treatment of *philomatheia* as a key characteristic of the philosopher, which is to be found in Michael Psellos, Michael Italikos and Theodore Metochites as well, I suggest that the two dialogues should be considered together. First, *Philomathes* can be read as a demonstration of *philomatheia* and, thus, as a discourse and example of love for learning. Second, having in mind such interpretation of *Philomathes*, as well as the dialogical narrative of *Phlorentios*, I argue that the latter can be read according to its *skopos*, namely as a discourse of what the lover of learning strives to achieve, namely of wisdom, and thus, as an example of what wisdom is or is not.

Notes

- * I am grateful to New Europe College and to the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Bucharest for providing me with the resources needed for conducting the research and completing this paper. I am especially thankful to Niels Gaul, Gergana Dineva and Tzotcho Boyadzhiev for their invaluable feedback on the research presented here.
- 1 Michael Psellos, *Theological Discourse*, 114.1–8: δεῖ τὸν φιλόσοφον παντοδαπὸν εἶναι καὶ φιλοτιμείσθαι μὴ μόνον ἐπιστήμας καὶ τέχνας εἰδέναι, ἐξ ὧν σοφία καὶ φρόνησις τὸ συναγόμενον πέφυκεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἱστορίαν συλλέγειν καὶ γεωγραφίας ἔχεσθαι καὶ τῆς ἄλλης μουσικῆς μὴ ἀπείρως ἔχειν· μουσικὴν δέ φημι οὐ τὴν ἐν καθαρτοῖς ὀργάνοις μελοποιῶσαν καὶ χρῆσιν ἀπλῶς. ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν τὴν ἐκ λόγων συναγομένην ἱστορίαν τε καὶ παιδείαν καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀπλῶς εὐμάθειάν τε καὶ πολυμάθειαν; trans. Duffy. See Duffy, 'Hellenic Philosophy in Byzantium', 149–50 n. 38.
- 2 Duffy, 'Hellenic Philosophy in Byzantium', 151.
- 3 According to Duffy, '[I]ike Psellos, Italikos pushes his intellectual curiosity to the limits and defends himself by appealing to the same concept of *philomatheia*'. Unlike Psellos, however, Italikos equated *polymatheia* with *polypragmosyne* or *periergasia*, i.e. with the concept of objectionable curiosity. Duffy, 'Reactions of Two Byzantine Intellectuals', 91. See also Michael Italikos, *Letter*, 30.6–7 and *Letter*, 31.2–10: ἐγὼ γάρ, φιλότατῃ ψυχῇ, καὶ μοι μὴδὲν ἀπιστήσεας, πολλὰ τοιαῦτα οἶδα καὶ ὅσα οὐκ ἂν τις τῶν κατὰ τήνδε τὴν φορὰν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίσταιτο, βίβλους περὶ τούτων ἀναλεξάμενος παμπόλλας Χαλδαϊκάς τε καὶ Αἰγυπτιακάς καὶ ὅποσα Πρόκλῳ τε τῷ φιλοσόφῳ περὶ τῆς ἱερατικῆς διεσπούδασται τέχνης, ἣν καὶ μαγικὴν ὀνομάζουσι, καὶ ὅσα τοῖν δυοῖν Ἰουλιανοῖν συγγεγράφαται καὶ Ἀπολλωνίῳ τῷ Τυανεῖ καὶ πολυμαθεστάτῳ Ἀφρικανῷ, ἀλλὰ καὶ εἰ τι ταῖς τριοδίτισι γραυσὶ πεφλυάρηται καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα περὶ τὸν ἰδιώτην εἰλεῖται ὄμιλον· καὶ μέχρι τούτων ἐξέτεινα τὸ φιλομαθὲς τῆς ψυχῆς.
- 4 Theodore Metochites, *Poem to Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos*, 105.93–106.97: τῆς ἰμείρονται | πᾶρ βίοντον μέροπες βρουτοὶ λελαχέσθαι δαρὸν, | ὅσσοις τοι νόος ἦ ῥα σαόφρων ἀστυφέλικτος, | τὰδ' ἔνεκά μιν αὐτὸς οἶων ἀτρεκέα δῆ; trans. Cunningham, Featherstone, and Georgiopoulou, 113.

- 5 Theodore Metochites, *Poem to Nikephoros Kallistos Xanthopoulos*, 109.252–3: καὶ τόδ' ἐμοὶ νοὸς ἡδὲ πολυμαθίης τε τεῦχος | μαρτύρετ' ἴσως κράτος; trans. Cunningham, Featherstone, and Georgiopolou, 115.
- 6 Paraphrased by Michael J. Featherstone; see Featherstone, 'Theodore Metochites's *Semeioseis gnomikai*; Personal Encyclopedism', 337. For the edition of the Greek text, see Metochites, *Essays*, ed. Müller and Kießling, 739–40.
- 7 Theodore Metochites, *Essay*, 71, ed. Hult, 240.12–16: ἀπόδειξιν ἔχει τοῦτ' αὐτὸ [. . .] τῆς τοῦ Πλουτάρχου σπεριουσίας κατὰ τὴν τῆς σοφίας ἕξιν καὶ κτῆσιν, καὶ τῆς περὶ πάντα πολυμαθίας καὶ περινοίας καὶ τῶν τῆς διανοίας αὐτοῦ θησαυρῶν καὶ ὧν ἐναπέθετο παντοίων κόσμων καὶ κειμηλίων, καὶ ὡς κατ' οὐδὲν ἀνὴρ ἐνδεής; trans. Hult, 241.
- 8 *PLP* 4443. For arguments concerning the dates of Gregoras's life, see Beyer, 'Chronologie', 127–55. See also Grecu, 'Geburtsjahr', 56–61. For a comprehensive, though outdated, account of Gregoras's life, see Guiland, *Essai sur Nicéphore Grégoras*. One of the most useful biographical accounts, however, as well as a catalogue and concise description of Gregoras's works, is found in van Dieten, *Rhömische Geschichte/Historia Rhomaike*, 1:1–62. For an updated bibliography on Gregoras see Dunaev, 'Nicephorus Gregoras', 369–76.
- 9 Hohlweg, 'Drei anonyme Texte', 13–45; Schönberger and Schönberger, *Lebenslehre in drei Dialogen*.
- 10 *PLP* 11551.
- 11 *PLP* 6489. For Browning's attribution of the three dialogues to John Zacharias the Aktouarios, see Browning, 'Tradition and Originality', 23. For an attribution of authorship to John Katrarios, see Jürss, 'Johannes Katrarios', 275–84.
- 12 Gautier, '*De daemonibus* du Pseudo-Psellos', 131.
- 13 Gregoras's imperial orations, like many of the texts he authored and many aspects of his thought, are understudied. On its dating, see Leone, 'Ad imperatorem Andronicum II orationes', 500–1 and for a summary of its contents in Italian, 516–18.
- 14 *PLP* 30539.
- 15 Garzya, 'Opusculum inédit', 521–32. On the hypothesis that the short treatise was written not by Nikolaos, but by his uncle Neilos, as well as for further bibliography, see Polemis, 'Nikolaos Kabasilas's *De vita in Christo*', 102 and n. 5.
- 16 Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*, 56–7. For some general observation on dialogues in Byzantine literature, see Ieraci Bio, 'Il Dialogo', 35–7. Currently, a project dedicated to Byzantine dialogues is underway at the University of Silesia in Katowice.
- 17 Golitsis, 'Theodore Prodromos', 1270.
- 18 Zografidis, 'Nikephoros Blemmydes', 893–4.
- 19 Paparozzi, 'Appunti', 921–51.
- 20 Ierodiakonou and Bydén, 'Byzantine Philosophy'. On the use of dialogue as a form of self-defence in twelfth-century Byzantium, see Pizzone, 'Anonymity', 225–43.
- 21 For reliable summaries of the scholarly discussion, see the introductions to both Ierodiakonou, *Byzantine Philosophy*, 1–13 and Ierodiakonou and Bydén, *Many Faces*, 1–22. For critical assessment of modern scholarship of Byzantine philosophy, see Ivanović, 'Byzantine Philosophy', 369–80; Trizio, 'Byzantine Philosophy', 247–94. Some methodological issues are briefly discussed in Averil Cameron, *Byzantine Matters*, 93–4.
- 22 Notably, see Bydén, 'Criticism of Aristotle', 107–22.
- 23 For a recent discussion of *Phlorentios* as an anti-Barlaamite polemic and satire, see Mariev, 'Παιδεία und ἀστείότης'.
- 24 *PLP* 2284.
- 25 *PLP* 10973.
- 26 On whether the debate between Gregoras and Barlaam actually happened see Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, 32. While Leone considers the *Phlorentios* purely fictional, Medvedev

- disagrees. Medvedev, *Vizantijskij gumanizm XIV–XV vv.*, 15. On this dating, see Bydén, 'Criticism of Aristotle', 111.
- 27 For instance, Leone, 'Φιλομαθῆς ἢ περὶ ὕβριστῶν', 171–2; Tihon and Mogenet, *Traité sur les éclipses de Soleil*, 151–2.
- 28 For instance, Gregoras, *Letters*, 28, 40, 53, 83, 103 and 114.
- 29 Tihon, 'Sciences exactes à Byzance', 380–434; Tihon and Mogenet, *Traité sur les éclipses de Soleil*, 156; Bydén, 'Criticism of Aristotle', 111.
- 30 Leone, 'Φιλομαθῆς ἢ περὶ ὕβριστῶν', 172; Leone, *Fiorenzo*, 27–35; Tihon and Mogenet, *Traité sur les éclipses de Soleil*, 152.
- 31 Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, 27–8.
- 32 *PLP* 17982.
- 33 Gregoras, *Philomathes*, 174; Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, 32. Ševčenko, *Études*, 169–71 and especially 170 n. 2. For a criticism of contemporary audience set in similar terms, see Metochites's *Essay*, 9, ed. Hult, 1–17 on the impossibility of expressing one's thoughts.
- 34 Tatakis, *Byzantine Philosophy*, 213–4; Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, 34–5.
- 35 For a brief but important observation relating *Philomathes* to Gregoras's edition of Ptolemy's *Harmonics*, see Bydén, 'Criticism of Aristotle', 112.
- 36 For a comparable dismissal of textual and contextual complexity due to the polemical nature of the exposition with respect to Barlaam the Calabrian's anti-Latin treatises, see Kolbaba, 'Barlaam the Calabrian', 63.
- 37 The dating of Gregoras's *Commentary on Synesios's On Dreams* proposed by Ševčenko, namely between 1330 and 1332, is related to the identification of the *Commentary's* addressee as the *megas domestikos* John Kantakouzenos. For Ševčenko's arguments, see Ševčenko, 'Some Autographs of Nicephorus Gregoras'. Importantly, Bydén recently revisited Ševčenko's identification of the original dedicatee of Gregoras's commentary as John Kantakouzenos and, consequently, proposed an earlier *terminus post quem* for the composition of the commentary, namely before May 1328. For Bydén's arguments in favour of an earlier dating, see Bydén, 'Nikephoros Gregoras' Commentary', 161–86.
- 38 See also *ibid.*, 162–3.
- 39 Plato, *Phaedo*, 82b–c: εἰς δέ γε θεῶν γένος μὴ φιλοσοφήσαντι καὶ παντελῶς καθαρῷ ἀπιόντι οὐ θέμις ἀφικνεῖσθαι ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ φιλομαθεῖ; trans. Fowler, 287.
- 40 Gregoras, *Synesios*, 138A 157, 03, 40, lines 23–6: 'εἰς δέ γε θεῶν γένος μὴ φιλοσοφήσαντι καὶ καθαρῷ παντελῶς ἀπιόντι οὐ θέμις ἀφικνεῖσθαι ἀλλ' ἢ τῷ φιλομαθεῖ'. φιλομαθῆ δὲ τὸν φιλόσοφον λέγει, ὥς φιλοπράγμονα καὶ ἐρευνητικὸν περὶ τὴν φύσιν τῶν ὄντων; my translation. On Metochites's remark as to the insufficient *polymatheia* of Synesios which relates to the main theme of the prefatory letter to Gregoras's *Commentary on Synesios's On Dreams*, see Bydén, 'Nikephoros Gregoras' Commentary', 165–6.
- 41 See also a more elaborate and explicit relation of *philomatheia* with philosophy in Plato's *Resp.*, 2.16.376b–c.
- 42 Hereafter *Protheoria*. Notably, according to Pietrosanti, though initially intended as an intrinsic part of the work, at some point the *Protheoria* started circulating as an autonomous letter, possibly due to Gregoras's attempt to accommodate to changed political circumstances by providing a different prefatory letter addressed to a new dedicatee. Gregoras, *Commentary on Synesios*, 130 and n. 5.
- 43 Isocrates, *To Demonicus*, 18: ἐὰν ᾗς φιλομαθῆς, ἔση πολυμαθῆς; trans. Norlin, 14.
- 44 Gregoras, *Commentary on Synesios. Protheoria*, 123.6–9: Ἰσοκράτους γὰρ εἰρηκότος 'ἐὰν ᾗς φιλομαθῆς, ἔση πολυμαθῆς', σὺ τὸ ἀντίστροφον πράττεις. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐγένου, τὸ δ' αἰεὶ γίγνη. φιλεῖς γὰρ αἰεὶ τὸ μαθάνειν, ὥσπερ οὐκ ἀρκουμένης σοι τῆς φύσεως ἐπὶ γε τοῖς φθάσασιν; my translation.
- 45 *Ibid.*, line 9.

- 46 Cf. Gregoras, *First Solution*, line 9. Compare also Gregoras, *Commentary on Synesios. Protheoria*, line 8 referring to the *Commentary*'s dedicatee (φιλεῖς γὰρ | ἀεὶ τὸ μανθάνειν) with Philomathes referring to himself in Gregoras, *Philomathes*, line 20 (ἐς γὰρ τὸ ἀεὶ διὰ σπουδῆς ἄγων μανθάνειν).
- 47 PLP 21365.
- 48 Plato, *Apology*, 18b: τὰ τε μετέωρα φροντιστῆς; trans. Fowler, 73.
- 49 Gregoras, *First Solution*, lines 1–11: Πλάτων ὁ Ἀρίστωνος ἐπὶ φιλοσοφία τὰ κράτιστα τῶν ἐπαίνων παρὰ πάντας ἀνελημμένος οἷς ἐς λόγων ἰσχὺν ὁ χρόνος μακρὸν ἐχαρίσατο κλέος, τὰ τε ἄλλα καλῶς ἀπεφήνατο καὶ διὰ καὶ τὸδε συνάδει τοῖς βάρους ἔχουσι διανοίας αὐτοῦ· αὐτόχρομα γὰρ εἶναι φησι φιλόσοφον τὸν φιλομαθῆ. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ ἐν προθύροις ἐτι τὸν φιλομαθῆ τῆς σοφίας συμβαίνει καθῆσθαι καὶ μήπω τῆς ἀκροπόλεως ἐπιβαίνειν, ἀλλ' ἐνέχυρον ἔχοντα σαφές τὸ φροντιστὴν τὰ μετέωρα εἶναι καὶ ὅσα γῆ τε καὶ οὐρανὸς ὥραϊα φέρει θεάματα καὶ ἀκούσματα πάντων ἐξεταστὴν ὑπάρχειν φιλότιμον, ἔξιν ἦδη καὶ ταύτην αὐτὸν ὁ τοῦ εἰκότος ὑπισχνεῖται λόγος αὐτίκα μάλα·; my translation.
- 50 Trizio has noted that Gregoras's account is modelled after Eustratios of Nicaea's praise of Anna Komnene's erudition in his commentary on *Nicomachean Ethics* VI (256.1–257.11), see Trizio, 'Byzantine Fortune', 208.
- 51 In the Aristotelian sense. See Aristotle, *On the Soul*, 3.7.431a1.
- 52 Gregoras, *First Solution*, lines 11–22: ὅτι δὲ τῶν τοιούτων ἡμῖν λόγων κάτοπτρον ὑπάρχει σαφές τὸ σὸν φιλομαθές, ὃ θεία βασιλῆς, ἐνταυθοῖ οὐδεὶς ἂν ἐπιστρατεύσειεν οἷμα λόγος ἀντίπαλος τήμερον βιαίως αὐτῶν τὸ βέβαιον ἀφαιρούμενος. Τὸ γὰρ τῆς σῆς ψυχῆς ζητητικὸν ὁδὸς καὶ ὑπέκκαυμά σοι γίνεται κράτιστον πρὸς πολυμάθειαν ἐρεθίζον ἀεὶ καὶ εὗρεσιν τῆς κατ' ἐνέργειαν ἐπιστήμης καὶ ἥκιστα γε τοῖς φθάσασι μόνοις ἀρκεῖσθαι ἑὼν, ἀλλ' ἐτέρας ἐφ' ἐτέραις ἀπορίαις ὑψηλοτέρων ἐφευρίσκον νοημάτων, οὐδαμῇ διαλείπει πρὸς λύσεις ἡμᾶς προκαλούμενον καὶ πειθον ἔργοις αὐτοῖς ἀληθεύειν ἠγεῖσθαι Πλάτωνα πηγὴν φιλοσοφίας εἶναι καὶ ἀρχὴν τὸ τῆς γνώμης φιλομαθὲς ἀποφανόμενον; my translation.
- 53 For a similar assessment of the use of dialogical form in order 'to transcend mere theorizing . . . and instead to *demonstrate*', see Ziolkowski, 'Twelfth-Century Understandings', 67–8.
- 54 For instance, Gregoras, *Philomathes*, 173–4; Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, 30.
- 55 For the rapprochement between dialogue and letter in the Hellenistic and Second Sophistic literature, characterised, among other things, by the presence of the authorial *persona* in the narrative, see Jazdzewska, 'From *Dialogos* to *Dialogue*', 30.
- 56 It is worth noting that in his *Essays*, Gregoras's mentor Metochites reflected on the use of the dialogical form by Plato and attributed it to the latter's opposition against rhetoric. In his *Essay*, 24.204–8, ed. Hult ('That Plato Always Uses The Dialogue Form Because of His War Against Rhetoric'), Metochites contrasted the dialogical form, with its short and frequent questions and answers, to the sequential, continuous, straightforward, and, therefore, persuasive rhetorical exposition.
- 57 Gregoras, *Philomathes*, 172.
- 58 See, for instance, *ibid.*, lines 29–32.
- 59 *Ibid.*, lines 70–81.
- 60 *Ibid.*, lines 99–108.
- 61 *Ibid.*, lines 151–60.
- 62 *Ibid.*, lines 161, 174.
- 63 *Ibid.*, lines 202–3. Gaul, *Thomas Magistros*, 190 interprets Thomas Magistros's similar rhetoric against the 'sophists', the latter being labelled 'charlatans', in the context of the competition between late Byzantine *pepaideumenoi*.
- 64 *Ibid.*, lines 20–1.
- 65 *Ibid.*, lines 96–8.
- 66 *Ibid.*, lines 255–67.

- 67 Ibid., lines 268–90.
- 68 Ibid., line 291ff.
- 69 For a survey of Byzantine discussions concerning the limits of knowledge and, in particular, of Byzantine views of scepticism between the seventh and the fourteenth centuries, see Demetracopoulos, 'Christian Scepticism', 243–5 and especially 351ff.
- 70 See, for instance, Gregoras, *Letters*, 34 and 134.
- 71 Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, lines 628–45: οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀληθὲς οὐδὲ βέβαιον, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐν ἀδήλοις πελάγεσι κυκάται καὶ ναυαγεῖ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα, καὶ βαθὺς τις πλάνος καταχορεύει τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης σπουδῆς 'ἄνω καὶ κάτω σοβῶν καὶ ταράττων' πᾶσαν βουλευτηρίων ἰσχὺν καὶ κύβων δίκην ἀνατρέπων τὰ δόγμασιν ἰσχυροῖς κυρούμενα σκέμματα, καὶ νῦν μὲν τοῖς προσδοκωμένοις ἀπροσδόκητον φέρων τὸ τέλος, νῦν δὲ τοῖς ἀδοκῆτοις εὐτυχῇ τινα τὴν παλάμην. εἰ δὲ τις ἀντιτείνειν ἐθέλει καὶ ἀντιπαλαμᾶσθαι πρὸς τοὺς τοιοῦτους τῶν πραγμάτων κύβους, μάταιος ὁ τοιοῦτος ἔμοιγε φαίνεται εἶναι καὶ διανοίας τινὸς χαμερποῦς, ὁποῖαν αἱ χεῖρες τῆς ἀλογωτέρας φύσεως ἐς ὕλης τινὸς ἀγλῶδους ἀπολαβοῦσαι πυθμένας κατήνεγκαν, ὥς μὴδ' ἐννοεῖν ἔχειν ὅτι λόγοι προνοίας τὰ πραττόμενα καὶ γινόμενα περιτρέχουσιν, ἐκάστου τέλους ἔχοντες ἐνέχυρα προκαταβληθείσας αἰτίας, ἃς ἡμεῖς ἐκόντες ἐπιλανθανόμεθα τὸ ἐκεῖθεν ἀηδὲς ὑπὸ φιλαυτίας ἐκκλίνοντες. ἡ δὲ δίκη τῷ γραμματεῖ ἑαυτῆς ἐγγαράζασα, θέρους καὶ ἄλωνος εἰπεῖν περιμένει καιρὸν, ἵν' ἐπάξια τῶν σπερμάτων τοῖς πράξασιν ἀποδῶ τὰ γεώργια; my translation.
- 72 Tatakis, *Byzantine Philosophy*, 213–14; Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, 34–5; Ierodiakonou, 'Anti-Logical Movement', 219–36.
- 73 Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, lines 978–1025. See also Bydén, 'Criticism of Aristotle', 116–17.
- 74 Ibid., lines 904–14.
- 75 Ibid., lines 1026–7.
- 76 Ibid., lines 1040–2: ἔφημεν γὰρ καὶ ἀνωτέρω ὡς ἐν τοῖς μὴ μένουσιν ὅλως ἀλλ' αἰεὶ ρέουσιν οὐχ ἔξει χώραν ἐπιστημονικὸς καὶ ἀποφαντικὸς λόγος οὐδεὶς; my translation.
- 77 Ibid., lines 1046–7: ὡς λόγοι προνοίας ἀπόρρητοι τὰ παρόντα περιτρέχουσι πράγματα; my translation.
- 78 Bydén, 'Byzantine Epistemology', 301.
- 79 See his *Essay*, 23, 'On the Uncertainty in Natural Science', ed. Hult, 200–4.
- 80 On Metochites, see Magdalino, *L'Orthodoxie des astrologues*, 146–7. On Gregoras, see Manolova, 'Discourses of Science and Philosophy'.
- 81 Gregoras, *Phlorentios*, lines 664–9: ΝΙΚΑΓΟΡΑΣ· ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τουτονὶ τὸν σοφὸν Ξενοφάνην θαυμάζω, πῶς ἐν ἀδήλοις καὶ ἀβεβαίοις πράγμασι βεβαίως ἔρχεται φέρων ἐλπίδας αὐτὸς καὶ οἶται νικᾶν πανταχῇ· ἴσμεν γὰρ ὡς τῆς ἀνωθεν μὴ συναιρομένης προνοίας τοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων βουλευμασί τε καὶ πράγμασι πονηρὸν αὐτοῖς ἀπαντᾶ τὸ τέλος καὶ σφόδρα ἐναντιώτατον; my translation.
- 82 Ibid., lines 674–7: ΞΕΝΟΦΑΝΗΣ· 'μὴ θαύμαζε', ἔφη, 'σοφὲ Νικαγόρα· λεληθέναι γὰρ σε δοκῶ μοι περιφανῶς ὡς τῶν ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐστὶν ἱκανοὺς ἐς τὸ νικᾶν καὶ μὴ νικᾶν καθίστασθαι'; my translation.
- 83 Ibid., lines 704–10: φέρε τοίνυν τὸν ὠροσκόπον ἐκεῖνον δεξάμενος στήθι παρὰ τὴν 'ἡλίου ἀκτῖνα' καὶ τὴν ὥραν ἣτις ποτὲ εἴη ἐν γε τῷ παρόντι δίδαξον, ἵνα ὡς ἐξ ὁρμητηρίου τινὸς ἀληθοῦς ἀφικόμενος ἐς τὴν εὐρεσιν τοῦ τε ἡλίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀστέρων, ὅπῃ τοῦ ζῳδιακοῦ τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες ἕκαστος, ἔχῃς σαφεῖς καὶ ἀναντιρρήτους τὰς ἀποδείξεις ποιεῖσθαι τῶν ἐμπεριειλημμένων ταῖς τούτων κινήσεις λόγων; my translation.
- 84 Ibid., lines 719–22: τίς γὰρ ἄνθρωπος ὦν γηγενὴς ἀνέλθοι ἐς οὐρανὸν πώποτε, ἵνα θεασάμενος καὶ κατεληφὼς δρόμους ἀστέρων καὶ διαστάσεις καὶ ἀντιφράξεις αὐτῶν, 'σαφές τι ἀγγέλλειν' ἔχοι τοῖς ἄλλοις; my translation.
- 85 Ibid., lines 685–6: 'παντοδαπὴν καὶ ποικίλην', ὧ Νικαγόρα, καὶ πρὸς πάντα ἀρκέσουσαν, ὅποσα καὶ οἷά τις ἂν ἐρωτᾶν βούλοιο; my translation.

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15 Dramatisation and narrative in late Byzantine dialogues

Manuel II Palaiologos's *On Marriage* and *Mazaris' Journey to Hades*

Florin Leonte

On October 30, 1938, on the day of Halloween, the CBS radio network broadcast a dramatised version of H.G. Wells's novel, *War of the Worlds*. According to eyewitness reports,¹ the programme directed by Orson Welles caused great panic among some of its listeners who were led to believe that the news bulletins included in the show and announcing an imminent alien invasion of the earth was real. Owing to a combination of exaggerated storytelling, interviews with pseudo-scientists and realistic special effects of cosmic-scale conflict, this well-crafted radio drama remains a well-known episode of twentieth-century media history for provoking the prompt reaction of the public authorities, who subsequently imposed stricter regulations on broadcasters. However much this episode revealed about public confusion of fiction and reality, it also indicates the influence that a dramatic staging can have on an audience. Admittedly, what triggered that brief moment of mass panic was the programme director's understanding of how the form of a news bulletin can act upon listeners: an audience would take for granted the information because of the form in which that information was moulded.

Welles's famous radio programme also stands as a reminder of the fact that dramatisation has long constituted a driving force behind models of communication, education and production of knowledge.² A result of using techniques borrowed from dramatic representations is the great number of dialogic compositions produced across ages and cultures. Among these, the mediaeval dialogues, as ways to inject life or to bring back to life fictional and real interactions, often used dramatisation as a means of character building, making complex arguments more intuitive or simply entertaining readers. In time, under the influence of Plato's and Lucian's texts and with the crystallisation of literary patterns of debate, all these purposes embedded in dialogues created a series of corresponding generic expectations that authors followed or manipulated for alternative effects.³

In Byzantium, the rich ancient tradition and the versatility of the dialogic form insured its survival and intermittent renewals. Occasionally, under specific intellectual and social conditions, dialogues became essential for conveying messages and meanings. This is particularly the case for the last centuries of Byzantine history, when the centrality of dialogue and disputation cannot escape notice given the substantial series of polemical treatises, letter exchanges and doctrinal or philosophical dialogues.⁴ Scholars of the Palaiologan period intensely debated

religious issues such as the Trinity (Gennadios Scholarios and Theodoros Agalianos), polemicised over the faith of the Muslims and the Latins (Manuel Palaiologos and Joseph Bryennios), examined aspects of social injustice (Alexios Makrembolites) or discussed the validity of arguments elaborated in ancient texts (Nikephoros Gregoras). However, theology and philosophy were not the only areas of written debate since embedded dialogic elements as well as self-standing dialogues were used for other purposes as well. For instance, extensive conversations constitute debates that frame the contemporary popular animal epics or in romances where they constitute a vector of advancing the narrative plot. Yet among the Palaiologan texts, one finds two self-standing dialogues, which, in terms of subject matter, have little resemblance to similar contemporary compositions: an ethical dialogue on marriage penned by the Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1350–1425, r. 1392–1425) around the year 1396 and entitled 'Dialogue with the Empress-Mother on marriage' (Ἡθικὸς ἢ Περί γάμου), and an anonymous 'Dialogue of the Dead, or Mazaris' Journey to Hades' (Νεκρικὸς διάλογος ἢ ἐπιδημία Μαζάρη εἰς ᾍδου), dated after 1414, which records the journey of a distressed courtier into the underworld. Although worlds apart in terms of content, both texts rely on the construction of similar effects and make use of a sophisticated Atticising style, which suggests that they addressed similar learned audiences. Even if we know little about their circulation and impact in their time,⁵ a careful textual analysis of their dialogic form can offer engaging perspectives on the role of the dialogue form in the intellectual milieu of late Byzantium as well as an additional criterion against which to judge similar contemporary productions.⁶

In this chapter, by contextualising and analysing in tandem these two dialogues, I will explore two key areas of their literary composition: dramatisation and, connected to that, embedded narrative and storytelling. My concern here is with the conditions of their use and with the role they played in shaping acts of public communication by adding further reality effects. As scholars of Platonic and Lucianic dialogues have long noticed, dramatisation and storytelling were commonly used to generate an effect of realism and authenticity of conversational interaction.⁷ I argue that, in their turn, the two Palaiologan authors, in contrast to other contemporary writers, heavily used the conventions that engender theatrical effects in order to reinterpret and subvert cultural and social practices of communication and participation in the public space. The study of these two aspects that increase the interlocutors' level of interaction can also elucidate the epistemological differences between dialogue (as a form that involves a series of interactive performative acts allowing the use of signs and materials other than those pertaining directly to the subject matter) and other monological utterances such as treatises (which represent another model of knowledge acquisition), public speeches or invectives, genres also widely circulating in late Byzantium. The starting point of the present analysis is furnished by Virginia Cox's discussion of dialogues as both embodiments of communicative ideals and literary texts calling attention to the act of communication itself.⁸ Cox also stressed the interdependency between dialogic form and content and argued that the precise functions of a dialogue vary

according to its structure and authorial strategies that often pertain to dramatic setting and narrative.⁹

The first text under investigation, Manuel Palaiologos's dialogue on the benefits of marriage, is a conversation written in the Platonic manner of questions and answers between two high-profile characters: the emperor-author himself and his mother, Helena Kantakouzene Palaiologina (1347–1397).¹⁰ Doubtless, Manuel was well acquainted with the dialogic form.¹¹ Previously, he had authored a much lengthier book of *Conversations* in which he polemicised with a Muslim *muterizis* over points of convergence found in Christianity and Islam. He also embedded a brief dialogue with the mourning audience in his *Funeral Oration for his Brother Theodore, Despot of Morea*, and used a highly disputational approach in his didactic *Verses Against an Atheist*.¹² Although the title of the text explicitly refers to marriage, the dialogue embraces more topics as it also discusses deceitfulness and touches on general issues of governance. Among the argumentative dialogues of the Palaiologan period, this one stands apart due to its subject matter: ethical and political. The inclusion of the text in the deluxe manuscript Vindobonensis philologicus graecus 98 (post 1417) dedicated by the emperor to his son, John VIII, attests to the didactic import foreseen by the author despite the thorough later revisions.¹³ In addition, given the mother's role in the emperor's education and political career,¹⁴ this dialogue can be regarded as replacing a panegyric. The text indirectly brings praise to the mother for her wit and learning, thereby suggesting the dialogue's possible correspondence with the earlier panegyric to his father, John V Palaiologos, written in the 1380s.¹⁵ Such literary encounters between mothers and sons were not unusual in the Palaiologan period, where we find authors such as John Chortasmenos and Marinos Phalieros who included similar verse conversations in their texts.¹⁶ The difference between Manuel's dialogue and other mother-and-son literary encounters resides in the fact that the latter are predominantly staged in funeral contexts and exploit the emotional aspects of a conversational situation,¹⁷ while Manuel's stands as the account of a vivid intellectual exchange. Likewise, dialogical enkomia were not unusual in the Palaiologan period: previously Manuel Philes, the early fourteenth-century court poet, authored a dramatic ethopoeia, a dialogic enkomion for the *megas domestikos* John Kantakouzenos, a text which featured the author himself and the abstract character of Νοῦς.¹⁸

Unlike these contemporary compositions underpinned by spiritual devotion or court necessities of praise, in Manuel's case, the dialogue is triggered by an occasional and informal exchange on a critical moment in the emperor's life: his late marriage at the age of forty-two, an episode which had the potential to threaten the dynastic succession of the last Palaiologoi, even if the danger was eventually thwarted.¹⁹ True to an informal framing of the conversation, the dialogue proceeds from a playful and witty debate on hiding and revealing facts; yet, it rapidly grows into an exchange of technical rhetorical subtleties that follow closely the recipe provided by ancient rhetorical handbooks on argumentation, so that, eventually, it touches on issues of governance with the emperor publicly revealing a conspiracy that sought to replace him with his nephew,

John VII, a ruler more favourable to the Ottoman hegemonic interests. In the epilogue, the author returns to the main question of the dialogue (is marriage beneficial?) and admits that marriage is to be undertaken at an early stage, especially in the case of rulers.

The second dialogue, titled *Mazaris' Journey to Hades* (post 1415) and preserved anonymously, documents the fictional *post mortem* experience of a Constantinopolitan courtier. Framed by the author's personal narrative of his condition (he suffered from a violent plague that decimated Constantinople's population), this text presents the conversations between the visitor to the underworld and other former imperial servants. Although the precise identification of characters with courtiers does not constitute the object of the present study,²⁰ we should keep in the back of our minds that the dialogue holds a political subtext in the form of blunt criticism against certain officials at the court of Manuel II.²¹ As noticed, like other contemporary texts, this composition reflects the fact that Byzantine politics were conducted in personal terms.²² In terms of literary models, undoubtedly, *Mazaris' Journey* echoes Lucian's satirical dialogues of the dead, very popular in the late Palaiologan period.²³ Previously, Lucian had been imitated in another famous Byzantine dialogue, *Timarion*, dated to the twelfth century.²⁴ While both Byzantine dialogues share the theme of the underworld journey, they differ in several key points: for instance, Mazaris's outspoken criticism contrasts the hidden messages, the philosophical scaffolding and allusive language of *Timarion*, generally a much more serious text;²⁵ likewise, the level of narrative description in the *Timarion*,²⁶ which describes in detail the real and not the underground world, is absent from *Mazaris*. Owing to its occasionally abusive language and sarcasm, it comes closer to a contemporary Byzantine invective penned by John Argyropoulos and titled *The Comedy of Katablattas* (post 1430).²⁷ In addition, both *Mazaris' Journey* and *Against Katablattas* share a similar set of themes, such as the criticism against 'deviant' sexual behaviour and low-quality rhetorical texts.²⁸ Further similarities in terms of debate structures and vituperative language can be traced in the animal epics dated to the fourteenth century: the *Tale of the Four-Legged Beasts* (Διήγησις τετραπόδων ζῴων), the *Book of Fruits* (Πορικολόγος) or the *Book of Birds* (Πουολόγος). These texts follow a similar scenario in which a certain character addresses an opponent with a string of negative epithets. Although not circulated as dialogues, essentially these texts were conceived as public debates that, like *Mazaris' Journey*, caricatured the court hierarchy and court life in general.²⁹

Dramatisation

To begin with, dramatisation, commonly defined as the attempt to act out something as if for a theatrical stage, can be analysed with regard to three main parameters: the communication context, the interaction level of the interlocutors and the nature of conflicts and disputes that generate change or progress within a conversation. These parameters converge in the intensification of an experience

intended to absorb the attention of the spectator. Although, in Byzantium, theatre as such was rather rare, the Byzantines were immersed in a *performance environment*³⁰ where drama played a central role. In addition to religious or political ceremonies (liturgy, festivals, coronations, etc.), dramatic techniques such as dialogues or staged directions appear in a variety of texts such as homilies or romances, where they were employed either in order to achieve persuasion or to advance a narrative plot. Thus, often homilists engage audiences in their presentations of biblical interpretations while novelists introduce facts and information on characters in dialogic framework.³¹ Albeit in varying degrees and sometimes masked by other apparent concerns, such dramatic conventions are present in both dialogues and arguably enhance their effects. At first glance, in the *Dialogue on Marriage*, the setting of the conversation between the mother and her son seems to be downplayed as the conversation begins abruptly without even a short prologue that was common in many other contemporary dialogues.³² Yet, at a closer examination, unlike in other argumentative dialogues with high-profile characters, Manuel introduces several salient theatrical and agonistic nuances. In the debut of the dialogue, when he approaches his mother and pretends to confess his conversational tactics that purportedly involved an initial lack of sincerity, he compares the ongoing dialogue with a staged representation: 'Well, mother, I did use in this dialogue a strategy appropriate for the theatrical stage'.³³ He maintains a similar stance when he parallels the ongoing dialogue to the theatrical conventions of dramatic representations,³⁴ staged feigning,³⁵ or of acting in guise of theatrical characters.³⁶ The analogy of the dialogue to a dramatic representation is made clearer when he alludes to the audience witnessing the emperor's revelation of his nephew's betrayal: 'And what is more, even now I happen to have them [i.e. the letters attesting the alliance with the Turks] with me and anyone interested is welcome to inspect them'.³⁷ Later in the dialogue, he insists on the importance of having an audience present during the act of performance: 'Everyone enjoys being a spectator, sitting and watching physical or intellectual battles'.³⁸ Such remarks are certainly not unique but echo other passages in the writings of Manuel, an emperor who took pride in chairing scholarly *theatra*.³⁹ Interestingly, he even goes a step further and, in addition to the idea of theatrical staging, compares the ongoing conversation with a physical contest (σωματικὸς ἀγών) where the winner (νικητής) would receive a prize (κέρδος and στέφανος, *Dialogue on Marriage*, 265–267). Even the rules of the game are laid out in a series of metadialogic remarks that establish how the dialogue will proceed according to a division between twelve topics of discussion (*Dialogue on Marriage*, 349–61).

A stronger dramatic effect is achieved by the two characters' interaction. No doubt, in many literary or philosophical dialogues, the interaction between characters generates a dramatic backdrop within which messages were produced. Yet here, unlike in other late Palaiologan dialogues, the familiarity of the interlocutors, the irony and the playfulness involved in the direct addresses of the characters point to a particularly high level of interaction between characters. The

beginning of the dialogue echoes the casual and intimate tone that subsequently dominates the text:

MOTHER: What are you saying? That in conversation you, of all people, tried to fool me? EMPEROR: Yes. M: Is that really so? E: Yes, it is. M: But you cannot make me believe that. In fact, you seem to be joking.⁴⁰

Likewise the ironic ending reinforces the colloquial tone of the text:

Come on, then, as the winning argument is on your side, let us present the prize. It will not be, though, a golden award as we said earlier. Golden crowns are at present in short supply: but everybody is eager for one and there is danger it might be stolen during the ceremony. Let the award, then, be of roses and branches, so that the victor may go home with the prize still in his possession.⁴¹

Irony echoes the interlocutors' close connections already emphasised by the remarks on the dialogue as part of a longer series of similar conversations;⁴² and by way of addressing that points to the mutual affection, since terms such as *παῖ*, *μητέρα* or *φιλάτατε* are used abundantly.⁴³

In terms of how the dramatic conflict is unravelled, the dialogue, despite its declared ethical-domestic concerns, moves its focus on social and political changes from the turn of the fifteenth century. Noticeably, like *Mazaris' Journey to Hades* but unlike other theoretical dialogues set in ancient times, Manuel offers details about the contemporary circumstances he comments upon. Thus, in parallel to the argumentation about marriage benefits, the text stages a rupture within the Byzantine dominant political paradigm of his time between, on the one hand, the emperor's supporters, and, on the other hand, the followers of Andronikos IV Palaiologos and of his son John VII, who pursued an agreement with the Ottomans.⁴⁴ Although during the 1380s Manuel participated in an alliance with the Ottomans, once he came into power in 1391, he decided to distance himself from them. The result of this sudden move was that, in retaliation, in the early years of his reign, the Ottomans blockaded Constantinople. The *Dialogue*, composed in 1396, that is at the beginning of that long blockade that was to last until 1402 and prompted Manuel II's famous journey to the west, is the first text he produced after the accession to the throne and in which he makes clear his intention to resist Ottoman pressures and to oppose their Byzantine supporters.

The other dialogue of interest here, *Mazaris' Journey to Hades*, focuses on a different kind of conflict and dramatises another instance of social change occurring in early fifteenth-century Constantinople: the conflicts within the group of imperial civil servants which caused distress to several courtiers among whom it is plausible to count the dialogue's anonymous author as well. The writer does not disclose all the reasons and the extent of these conflicts, but in a series of dialogic accounts, he follows the careers of different categories of displaced former

courtiers with whom he converses in more-or-less friendly terms.⁴⁵ All his interlocutors inquire with him about the evolution of events and their families in the real world, and often react in extreme ways.⁴⁶ The resulting impression of the conversations and their associated gestures is that of a satirical picture of a Byzantine class of court servants.

Here, the physical setting of the action, the underworld with its imaginary spaces populated by multitudes of dead courtiers, allowed for a more dynamic dramatisation in which the dialogue's characters (such as Holobolos, the emperor's secretary and guide during the journey; Skaranos, the ambassador; or Pepagomenos, the physician)⁴⁷ and not some abstract ethical or political principles, become the vectors of social change. The location and physical space in which the conversations take place are also outlined: the city of Constantinople, the valley of the underworld,⁴⁸ roads, trees and bushes.⁴⁹

Besides, Mazaris's dialogue includes a great many details that do not necessarily support the content of the conversation but arguably enhance the theatricality of the text. Especially the characters' feelings and emotions find explicit expression. Fear of speaking or aggressiveness dominate most inhabitants of the underworld: Holobolos turns white (ὠχρίσας⁵⁰), Philommataios whispers and cries (λέγει ὡς ἐν μυστηρίῳ οὐκ ἄδακρυτὶ⁵¹), and Padiates's looks are fierce (γοργὸν ἐμβλέψας ὥσπερ οἱ λέοντες⁵²). At the stylistic level, we see at work a language that, by borrowing heavily from the literature of invectives and satires, increases the degree of interactivity among characters. Conversations flow in a colloquial style, as attested by the inclusion of formulas of address borrowed from Italian.⁵³ The exchanges between characters combined with the author's interventions generate a vivid description of a virtual procession of former Constantinopolitan dignitaries moving in colourful episodes generated by petty conflicts that produce a strong dramatic effect. Padiates meets Holobolos and Mazaris, after he jumps from a myrtle bush where he was overhearing other people's conversations. As a result of this unexpected encounter, they exchange accusations of immorality.⁵⁴ Likewise, after leaving Padiates, they meet Antiochos, who interrogates them about his former lover, and the narrator takes the opportunity to portray him.⁵⁵ The two main characterological types, friends and rivals of the narrator, are also well fleshed by their interactions: while they do little to generate the *decorum* and loftiness of a conversation between two members of the ruling family, they nevertheless display the whole set of satirical traits (such as exaggerations or folly) and an insatiable curiosity for what is happening above in the world of the living.

Unlike Manuel's dialogue, where dramatisation is rather linear since it is largely determined by a single conversation that progresses gradually towards a solution of an ethical-political problem, here the satirical features and the theatrical conventions of the text prompt the author to radically change the course of the dialogue: he stops within the conversation, provides flashbacks by recalling past anecdotes or includes flash-forward accounts about plans for the return to the real world.⁵⁶ As the author splits focus with every encounter of a former courtier, the conversation grows into a variety of unrelated topics and skids away without a

clear ending in sight while the protagonists are forced to react not only verbally but sometimes also physically:

At this the villainous Padiates became so embarrassed, and at the same time so furious that he split the head of the honest Holobolos with the sturdy stick made of cornel wood, which he used as a support. His brain immediately began to 'pour down his nostrils' as Homer says. This caused much uproar and confusion and from everywhere people came running toward the disturbance.⁵⁷

Furthermore, like in the *Dialogue on Marriage*, additional dramatic effects are also generated by the references to the audience⁵⁸ invited to read the text as a moral lesson: 'This, spectators, is my account – a tearful rather than a cheerful one – of my involuntary trip, which I have described to the best of my ability, perhaps as a hoax, perhaps as a moral lesson in which earnestness is more important than fun'.⁵⁹ Such references appear not only in the dialogue but also in the paratextual references included in the epistolary epilogue that accompany the dialogue in the manuscript.⁶⁰

Storytelling

Connected to dramatisation, storytelling is another distinct aspect that generates reality effects and allows us to learn more about the dialogic strategies deployed by the two authors. Doubtless, many dialogues, be they Platonic or Lucianic, include narratives that indicate separate subtle trajectories in which a text is heading. They can frame a discussion or illustrate more complex arguments as, for instance, in the fifteenth-century *Dialogue on the Procession of the Holy Spirit* where the author, Theodore Agallianos, gives an account of the life of St Meletios in order to demonstrate his claims about true sanctity.⁶¹ Yet, Agallianos's narrative is rather isolated in the course of the dialogue, which developed several central themes for the ecclesiastic history of Byzantium before the fall of Constantinople: sanctity, refusal of papal primacy and of Latin innovations. Likewise, the brief narrative of Byzantine history included in the debut of Gregoras's *Phlorentios* seemingly adds little to the central preoccupation of the conversants, the criticism of Aristotle's views.⁶² On the contrary, both the *Dialogue on Marriage* and *Mazaris' Journey* seemingly place more emphasis on narratives with everything they entail (time, plot, agents), for neither author utilises storytelling as mere ornamental illustrative devices but rather in order to mark critical points in their argumentation or in the rhetorical representation of social order.

In addition to a small number of elliptical references to his family history,⁶³ Manuel's dialogue includes a more extensive narrative vignette that throws light on some of the hidden subversive messages of the dialogue. This narrative, which exposes the machinations of the pro-Ottoman Byzantine party led by his nemesis, John VII, stands as a revelation made to the audience and apparently interrupts the course of the dialogic argumentation that was pursued primarily by the mother

who remarks afterwards: 'M: Very witty indeed! But let us come back to the point of the discussion'.⁶⁴ This account, which represents the longest individual intervention in the text, stands in a stark contrast with the rest of the text: its tone is far from the witty, playful style of the initial and the last sections and unambiguously criticises his adversaries.⁶⁵ Most importantly, the length, the vehemence of the tone and the intensity of the allegations suggest that the whole dialogue was built with the unique purpose to unpack the revelatory information included in this brief narrative posited at a key moment in the discussion.

As for the *Dialogue of the Dead*, storytelling constitutes the very fabric of the text. Like in the *Timarion*, where narrative is even more substantial, the dialogue in *Mazaris' Journey* to Hades is framed by a fully fledged narrative that begins with the narrator's descent into Hades because of his illness:

To resume my story: I was snatched at dead of night, while my servants were snoring in the house and unaware of what was going on, and I came to a huge deep valley, crowded with men, too many to count. They were neither young nor old but all of the same age except for their facial features which varied as do those of men in this life.⁶⁶

Then he recounts how he entered Hades and the story follows in the steps of Mazaris and Holobolos's walk through the underworld. Storytelling also allows for character description and increases the interactional behaviour of the underworld characters, as the reader moves from one account to another. More importantly, it generates the junctures between the episodes of the underworld travelogue for each character, that the underworld traveller encounters, has a story to tell: Holobolos, speaks about his professional decline due to his trust and to an affair with a nun,⁶⁷ while others also speak about their past in the living world.

Situating dramatised dialogues in context

These findings suggest that, although the two dialogues differ in scope and content, in both cases, dramatisation and storytelling represent key tools of literary construction and deploying messages that emphasise political and social change. With their help, the authors seemingly strive to generate genuine conversations and to provide more realistic representations of the world in which the interlocutors act and communicate. In this last section, I will discuss in more detail the functionality of these key strategies by exploring the late Byzantine contexts of dialogue production. One general observation that arises when looking at the contemporary doctrinal or philosophical debates is that they pay little to no heed to details that do not pertain to the central points of a conversation. In this scenario, most Palaiologan philosophers and theologians approach topics by displaying a number of arguments without providing extraneous evidence about the setting or the connections between characters. A telling example comes from Manuel II himself. His other dialogic text, the much more substantial *Conversations with a Muslim*,⁶⁸ includes certain dramatic elements such as the details on the circumstances

of the dialogue: the emperor meets the *muterizis* in the afternoon, close to the fire where more people were gathered, and begins his conversations.⁶⁹ Yet such details have little impact on the course of the dialogue, as the conversation lacks a dramatic conflict⁷⁰ and indicators of character interaction or of an audience are not present during the dialogue. Likewise, due to the technical character of the work, storytelling is replaced by complex theological and philosophical argumentation, elements that eventually engender an apologetic non-agonistic perspective over the matters of debate. The emperor and the *muterizis* find themselves indeed in a discussion over which faith is the true one and yet their conversation amounts to a series of doctrinal lectures.⁷¹ In fact, only a few sections of this extensive collection of thematic dialogues reflect a debate over contradictory doctrinal points. The strategy adopted in his *Conversations with a Muslim* was not uncommon in the period, for indicators of dramatisation and narrative are less prominent in other similar contemporary doctrinal dialogues such as Joseph Bryennios's *Dialogue on Islam*, Demetrios Chrysoloras's *Dialogue on Demetrios Kydones' Antirrhetic* or Nikephoros Gregoras's *Phlorentios*.⁷²

Given the popularity of dialogues in the Palaiologan period, it is plausible that here, on the one hand, by employing the dialogic form, Manuel tried to place himself more firmly within this line of authors of dialogues. In this way, he responded to the audience's expectations of an argumentative discussion. On the other hand, in a rhetorical twist, the large-scale use of dramatisation and narrative holds a subversive resonance towards the kind of dialogic content common in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. These features indicate that the underlying message of the dialogue needs to be sought beyond the argumentation in favour of or against the benefits of marriage. The emphasis on the theatrical unfolding of the debate has several consequences. First, by staging opposing views concerning marriage and succession in front of an audience, the author turns his listeners into equal participants in the debate over this ethical question. Second, the dramatised dialogic intimacy between the two related interlocutors highlights the centrality of kinship in court decisions. Third, it reverses and mixes up the idea of dialogic authority: even if the mother makes her son to concede defeat in the debate and is presented as a more experienced speaker, the text's dramatic construction and the narrative downplays the idea of argumentative superiority and, in reality, rather highlights the emperor's views. And fourth, the emphasis on the drama of the conversation indicates that here the medium itself served as the core message. The dialogue was thus meant to broadcast and reveal the act of communicating in front of a larger audience: the author opted for a mode of direct dramatised interaction where the real topic of the dialogue, the political succession within Palaiologan dynasty, was openly debated, not simply delivered monologically to a compliant audience.

An examination of the context of his political writings, the *Dialogue on Marriage* reveals further insights into the dialogue's role. As the emperor's very first political text and despite the subsequent heavy revisions, it was certainly circulated at least during the first part of his reign,⁷³ thereby arguably becoming a political manifesto reflecting his intention to reach decisions through debate

rather than through an apparent unanimity. The emperor's dialogue confronts the voice of authority with other public voices: throughout the text, both interlocutors maintain their argumentative positions and the end offers only a kind of bogus solution: rulers should not reject marriage. In addition, Manuel's dialogue does not construct an ultimate conclusive voice to validate an unequivocal message of truth.⁷⁴ The interlocutors make few attempts to solve completely the tensions that arise between them and make sure that the positions whence they make their claims are clear: Manuel is an emperor with responsibilities, political experience and knowledge of the current affairs while Helena's profile remains that of a wise mother.

In Mazaris's case, the preference for a dramatised dialogue framed in a narrative, instead of other literary forms (such as the invective or the animal epic, which could also have made the point of mere individual or social critique),⁷⁵ above all implies that sarcasm and caricature conveyed through individual storytelling can replace the quest for and the establishing of theoretical truth, a feature of the contemporary theological or philosophical dialogues; central to this process of diminishing the epistemic importance of theoretical substance defining other dialogues is the rendering of a detailed picture of a dystopian world. Within this picture, the leading character does not explore paths leading to truth but strives to regain the imperial favour and to give an unflattering portrait of other courtiers.⁷⁶ Furthermore, this process of devaluating theoretical argumentation is congruous with the subversiveness embedded in the Lucianic model⁷⁷ and with the author's attempts to debunk ideas of rhetorical authority that shaped the *theatra* organised in the court milieu. Thus, *Mazaris' Journey* includes not only social satire but also intellectual satire and criticism against dominating literary fashions. The undermining of the claims to epistemic superiority of theoretical dialogues is explicitly revealed in an episode when Mazaris, a typical member of the Byzantine court, makes several of his characters to voice their dissatisfaction with the kind of rhetoric cultivated in Byzantium as indicated by the vitriolic critique of Constantine Asanes, a late Palaiologan court rhetorician:

HOLOBOLOS: And first of all convey my warmest and most cordial greetings to that highborn and highly stupid and vulgar man Asan, and don't forget to give him this message: Even in Hades, most eloquent of the orators, I have not forgotten your golden words. Just as in the imperial palace I never missed an opportunity to share your writings with His Majesty and the others, so I remember you here in Hades too, and at night I repeat to great Pluto and Persephone your crystal-clear disquisition on the resurrection of the dead while in daytime I enjoy the pleasure of reciting before Minos, Aeacus, and Rhodamantys everything you wrote – all your sixty nine senseless and muddled discourses. My performances draw a full house of dead orators and philosophers. Some of the audience jump with glee, others laugh sardonically . . . because they are all so impatient to see you in person and hear from your lips your delightful (or so you think) rhapsodies.⁷⁸

A similar critique that touches on issues of rhetorical value is directed against Mouskaranos, the same as Demetrios Skaranos, a scholar and ambassador close to the emperor himself. He was criticised for his ignorance of Greek as well as for his double political allegiance, both for the Latin Pope and the emperor.⁷⁹ These instances indicate that Mazaris's criticism is directed not only against the courtly proverbial factionalism but, arguably through a calculated use of dialogic strategies, also against existing cultural fashions.

If Linda Garland recently argued that the text was intended as 'an amusement for the emperor and the court',⁸⁰ other clues as to the profile of *Mazaris' Journey* can be inferred by looking more closely at its Lucianic model. Noticeably, in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, Lucian's dialogues saw a significant revival in popularity as attested by the attention that scholars such as Manuel Chrysoloras, Bessarion or Isidore of Kiev gave to such texts by copying and circulating them.⁸¹ These scholars introduced Lucian to the Italian scholarly circles,⁸² where his literary style and moralisation became particularly appreciated.⁸³ As *Mazaris' Journey*, unlike the *Timarion*, remains faithful to its ancient model and retains the most conspicuous characteristics of Lucianic dialogues (such as abusive language and physical contact between protagonists), it is not farfetched to say that it was equally intended as a moralising dialogue where the intensity of dramatisation served as a way of suggesting necessary reforms.⁸⁴ These reforms targeted not only the courtiers' mores but also pro-Latin attitudes, as indicated by the attacks against Skaranos and his Latin allegiance.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced two dialogues which, even if different in terms of content, both rely on achieving reality effects through dramatisation and storytelling. The *Dialogue on Marriage* stages a dramatised debate and outlines the idea of a public contest for a prize between two interlocutors connected by a strong kinship relation. *Mazaris' Journey* paints the vivid picture of a world populated by half-grotesque characters that often fight with each other. Both texts contain a substantial amount of lifelike detail inserted in the course of conversations and expose different views that arise from interpersonal tensions and consequently become either irreconcilable or only partially solved. They had strong moralising undertones since they did not just argue in favour of a theoretical position but criticised behaviour and attitudes. As noticed, it is plausible that they were intended for public performance. I have tried to argue that in contrast to other contemporary dialogues where dramatisation or storytelling had a far more reduced scope, here they play a key role, despite the fact that at first sight they may seem elusive to track down. Since the level of dramatisation speaks about the author's intentions, I suggest that, as a means of composition operating across texts from different ages, dialogic theatricality can constitute an additional criterion for discerning the reasons why dialogues were preferred for certain social and political messages.

These strategies also allow us to understand better the relation between the two texts and the corpus of late Byzantine dialogues. The two dramatic dialogues

here presented can be read as acts of generic subversion in which the ancient models were used only as a means to capture all requirements correlated with dialogic composition and hence as a way to attract the attention of the readership acquainted with these dialogic models. From this perspective, their strategy had the same consequences as the episode of Welles's radio programme mentioned in the beginning: the authors created a set of expectations that, nevertheless, ultimately were thwarted by staging a different content in which the usual dialogic argumentation lost its original function.

By appealing to a readership acquainted with literary debates, the *Dialogue on Marriage* and *Mazaris' Journey* were meant to signal changes their authors desired in the Byzantine society of the turn of the fifteenth century. In both texts, the dialogue format became a tool of accommodating opposing views and of publicly displaying this process of debate and communication. In both texts, the choice of the dialogic form was therefore not accidental. Furthermore, the ways of adjusting different views by creating distinct dialogic situations shaped by drama and narrative introduce a certain ambiguity and problematise the possibility of cultural or political communication: while it offers a framework of debate and the possibility of consensus, these two late Palaiologan dialogues also suggest that disagreement and conflict continued to persist and that it was difficult to reach full agreement between groups or individuals.

Notes

- 1 Heyer, *Medium and the Magician*, 97–100.
- 2 For instance, biblical narratives have been constantly reworked in dramatic compositions as they provided moral scenarios, Strietman, 'Staged Conversations', 163–7.
- 3 On the forms, functions, and persistence of the dialogue form in the Middle Ages, see Novikoff, *Medieval Culture*, 8–34 and in particular 31: 'the ability of the dialogue to function as pedagogy and as polemic was an essential reason for its enduring success from ancient to medieval times'.
- 4 See the chapters by Niels Gaul, Divna Manolova, and George Karamanolis in this volume.
- 5 Both *Mazaris' Journey* and the *Dialogue on Marriage* have been preserved in two manuscripts each. The history of the *Dialogue* is particularly interesting: the author wrote it in 1396, but later he thoroughly reconsidered it as indicated by the changes he operated in a copy dated to 1417. See Angelou, *Dialogue on Marriage*, 11 ('Introduction').
- 6 Both texts have been used in prosopographical and historical analyses of court life. However, their use of dialogic form has remained unexplored.
- 7 Blondell, *Play of Character*, 1–53.
- 8 Cox, *Renaissance Dialogue*, 1–8 ('Problems of Method').
- 9 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 10 PLP 21365.
- 11 Manuel was acquainted with and collected Plato's dialogues as indicated by his letters to Kydones, *Letters*, 3 and 28.
- 12 Manuel Palaiologos, *Funeral Oration*, 235–9 and Στίχοι πρὸς ἄθεον ἄνδρα, 37–100.
- 13 The Vind. phil. gr. 98 includes several other educational texts penned by Manuel himself, such as the *Precepts of an Imperial Education* (fols. 3–30) and the *Seven Ethico-Political Orations* (fols. 31–106). The version of the Paris. gr. 3041 (fols. 89–104) is

- crossed out, a sign that the author might not have agreed any more with the content of the text. See Angelou's 'Introduction', *Dialogue on Marriage*, 13–20.
- 14 As a highly educated empress and a daughter of John VI Kantakouzenos, Helena was certainly not strange of the education and the promotion of her son Manuel to the position of the emperor. This move underlined her opposition to her first-born son, Andronikos IV. Dabrowska, 'Ought One to Marry?', 148–50.
 - 15 Manuel Palaiologos, *Panegyric on the Emperor's Health*.
 - 16 John Chortasmenos, *Epitaphios for Andreas Asanes as if Told by his Own Mother*, 227–37 and Marinos Phalieros, *Threnos*, 123–41.
 - 17 Both Chortasmenos and Phalieros deal with maternal emotions at the death of their sons.
 - 18 Manuel Philes, *Dramatic Ethopoeia*: Ἡθοποιία δραματική πονηθεῖσα τῷ Φιλῇ καὶ ἐγκωμίων υπόθεσιν ἔχουσα τῷ λαμπροτάτῳ μεγάλῳ δομεστικῷ Καντακουζηνῷ.
 - 19 Dabrowska, 'Ought One to Marry?', 146–56.
 - 20 Already done by Treu, 'Mazaris and Holobolos', 86–97, Trapp, 'Identifizierung der Personen', 95–9, and Garland, 'Mazaris's Journey to Hades', 183–214.
 - 21 The two manuscripts of the text were produced in the *mouσεων* of the Prodromos Monastery in Pera, which indicates its connections with the court universe of Manuel's reign, Angold, 'Political Arts', 85. Further, on the text's political undertones, see Garland, 'Mazaris's Journey to Hades', 212–14.
 - 22 Ibid.
 - 23 This was the period when top scholars such as Manuel Chrysoloras or Isidore of Kiev copied and circulated texts by Lucian, especially in the humanist circles. See Marsh, *Lucian and the Latins*, 12–13.
 - 24 On *Timarion*, see Kaldellis, 'Timarion', 275–88 and Alexiou, 'Stylistic Analysis', 29–45.
 - 25 Kaldellis, *Hellenism in Byzantium*, 281–3.
 - 26 The *Timarion* has long been recognised as an important source of twelfth-century history of Thessaloniki: it provides descriptions of the surrounding areas as well as of the Demetria festival, Vlachakos, *Timarion*, 20.
 - 27 On the *Comedy of Katablattas*, see Canivet and Oikonomides, 'La comédie de Katablattas', 5–97. Pamphlets and invectives were not uncommon at the Byzantine court. In a series of four letters, Emperor Manuel himself complained about such texts that circulated in the court and were directed against himself, *Letters*, 62–6, 174–85.
 - 28 John Argyropoulos, 'Against Katablattas', 1: in the title of the invective the addressee is addressed as 'a Priap'. Cf. also ll. 466–88.
 - 29 See Gaul, 'Partridge's Purple Stockings', 94–5 and Prinzing, 'Zur byzantinischen Rangstreitliteratur', 241–86.
 - 30 Mullett, 'No Drama, no Poetry', 227–9.
 - 31 Cunningham, 'Dramatic Device or Didactic Tool?', 111–12. On romances, see Beaton, *Medieval Greek Romance*, 132.
 - 32 E.g. Manuel Palaiologos's *Conversations with a Muslim* has an extensive explanatory preface.
 - 33 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 138: εὖ ἴσθι τοίνυν ὦ μήτηρ, ὡς σκηνῇ τινι ἐχρησάμην ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ διαλέξει; my trans. Angelou translates σκηνῇ with 'trick'.
 - 34 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 260: (. . .) δραμάτων καὶ σκηνῆς ποιητικῆς μὴ δεόμενος; trans. Angelou, 75: 'not needed to stage a complicated plot'; and 485: τῆσδε τῆς σκηνῆς τελείως καταγέλασσαι; trans. Angelou, 87: 'mocking life's travesty'.
 - 35 *Dialogue on Marriage*: ἐπιαττόμην (2), ἄγνοιάν τινα καὶ αὐτὴ πλαττομένη (3).
 - 36 *Dialogue on Marriage*: ὑπόκρισις (270), ὑποκριτής (116), προσωπεῖον (119, 989).
 - 37 *Dialogue on Marriage*: 707–8: οὐ μὴν, ἀλλὰ καὶ νῦν γε παρ' ἡμῖν ὄντα ταῦτα τυγχάνει· καὶ βουλομένοις, ἔξεστιν ὁρᾶν; trans. Angelou, 99.
 - 38 *Dialogue on Marriage*: 757–7–59: ἥδιστον γάρ φαίνεται πᾶσι τὸ θεατὰς καθεζομένους, ἢ πραγματικῶς ἢ λογικῶς πολεμοῦντας οὐστιασοῦν καθορᾶν, trans. Angelou, 105.

- 39 In particular in *Letters*, 30, 31, 33.
- 40 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 15–19: τί φῆς· ἀπάτη σύγε χρώμενος διείλεξαι μοι ποτέ; B.: Ναί. Δ.: Οὕτως; B.: Ναί οὕτως. Δ.: Ἀλλ’ οὐ πειθομένην μ’ ἔχεις, δοκεῖς δέ μοι παίζειν; trans. Angelou, 63.
- 41 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 1006–9: ἄγε οὖν, στεφάνω σοὶ τὸν νικητὴν ἀναδήσωμεν λόγον· πλὴν γε οὐ χρυσῷ, ὥς πρόσθεν εἰρηταί μοι· σπάνις γάρ νῦν τοῦτου γε· καὶ μέγα τοι τοῦτου πάντες ἐρῶσι· καὶ ἔστι δέος, μήποτε πομπεύοντος τίς τοῦτον ἀφέλῃται· ῥόδοις δὲ ἡ θαλλῶ, ἴν’ οἶκαδ’ ἀπέλθοι, τὸ γέρας ἔχων, trans. Angelou, 115.
- 42 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 1–2: ὦ μήτηρ· εἶποτε ἄλλως εἶχον δόξης περὶ τοῦ πράγματος, ἄλλως δὲ ἔχειν ἐπιδραστήριον διαλεγόμενός σοι.
- 43 All three terms are used abundantly at the beginning of almost each reply.
- 44 On Andronikos IV Palaiologos and his alliances, see Nicol, *Last Centuries*, 281–8.
- 45 E.g. Holobolos, Padiates, Antiochos.
- 46 E.g. against Misael Mouskaranos, 46.27–48.7
- 47 On the characters of Mazaris, see Trapp, ‘Identifizierung der Personen’, 95–9.
- 48 *Mazaris*, 6.7: κοιλάδα.
- 49 *Ibid.*, 10.122: δάφνη.
- 50 *Ibid.*, 27.1.
- 51 *Ibid.*, 12.29.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 26.23.
- 53 Bartholomew of Alagascos (*Mazaris*, 46.10): μπε βένια μισέ.
- 54 *Mazaris*, 25–8.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 41–3.
- 56 E.g. Bartholomew of Alagascos speaks about his son who worked in the salt business, *Mazaris*, 46.9–22; or the emperor is warned about Mouskaranos’ character, *Mazaris*, 48.10–28.
- 57 34.18–21: Ἐπὶ τοῦτοις ταραχθεὶς ὁ ἀλιτήριος Παδιάτης ἅμα τε καὶ μανεῖς, τὴν κεφαλὴν τοῦ χρηστοῦ Ὀλοβόλου κατέαξε τῷ ῥοπάλῳ ᾧ ἐπεστήρικτο· τὸ δ’ ἦν ἐκ κρανείας· ἐγκέφαλος δ’ εὐθὺς ἐκ ῥινῶν, καθ’ Ὀμηρον, ἔσταξε, trans. Smithies, 35.
- 58 On the audience of *Mazaris*, see Garland, ‘Mazaris’s Journey to Hades’, 209–12.
- 59 *Mazaris*, 60.20–22: Ταῦτ’ ἀντὶ δακρύων μᾶλλον, ᾧ παρόντες, ἢ γέλωτος, ὥς οἶόν τε, ἀρπαγεὶς παιδιᾶς χάριν ἢ παιδείας γέγραφα, σπουδάζων μᾶλλον ἢ παίζων; trans. Smithies.
- 60 *Mazaris*, 76–99.
- 61 Theodore Agallianos, *Dialogue*, 53.345–71.588.
- 62 Nikephoros Gregoras’s *Phlorentios*, 26–90.
- 63 Late marriage and also death of his young children, *Dialogue*, 658.
- 64 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 761: Ἀστεῖον λέγεις· καὶ δὴ λοιπὸν εἰς ἔργον τὸν λόγον ἀγάγωμεν; trans. Angelou, 103
- 65 *Dialogue on Marriage*, 990.
- 66 *Mazaris*, 5–8: Ἀρπαγεὶς οὖν, ὥς ἐφθην εἰπὼν, ἁπὸ νυκτῶν, τῶν οἰκετῶν μοι βεγγόντων ἐπὶ τῆς οἰκίας (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἦσθοντο τοῦ ξυμβάντος), ἐς μεγάλην τε καὶ βαθεῖαν ἀφικόμην κοιλάδα μεστὴν παμπόλων τε καὶ ἀναριθμήτων ἀνδρῶν, οὐ νέων οὐδὲ πρεσβυτέρων, ἀλλὰ μῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἡλικίας, ἀνευ τῆς τῶν προσώπων μορφῆς, trans. Smithies, 6.
- 67 *Mazaris*, 19–20.
- 68 Divided in twenty-six books on topics such as the nature of angels, the Prophet, faith, Trinity, Christ, etc.
- 69 *Dialogues with a Muslim*, 1.1–2: Ἐκαθήμην μετὰ δειπνον πρὸς τῇ πυρᾷ καὶ ταῦτὸν ὁ γέρων εἰωθότως ἐποίει ἄλλοις ἅμα τῶν ἡμετέρων καὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ παισίν.
- 70 Such a dramatic conflict might have easily been constructed, given the emperor’s tensed relations with the Ottomans. However, for most of the dialogue, the relations between the two are rather of mutual respect.
- 71 If the first nine dialogues are more polemical, as Manuel argues against the tenets of the Muslim faith (the Prophet and his doctrine), the last ones amount to an exposition of the Christian faith: Trinity, Christology, sanctity, and the Apostles.

- 72 Gregoras's *Phlorentios* is the only dialogue which includes several marks of dramatisation such as the characters' profiles or the setting of the conversation (Athens and Kerkyra).
- 73 At least until the first decade of the fifteenth century, when it was revised.
- 74 Tellingly, the dialogue closes with the emperor's words even if he is the one 'defeated' in the debate.
- 75 Cf. the *Comedy of Katablattas*, 40–3, where Argyropoulos highlights his preference for invective instead of a letter: 'Εβουλόμην μὲν οὖν μὴ κατ' ἐπιστολὴν εἶναι μοι τὸν παρόντα λόγον· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν σου τὸν τε βίον καὶ τὴν ἄλλην πολιτείαν ἀκριβῶς διήλθον καὶ τοῖς πᾶσιν ἔδειξα, μὴδ' ὅπως οὖν διαφέροντα κιναίδου.
- 76 On the possibility that *Mazaris' Journey* was written as a way of regaining imperial favour, see the dedicatory letter addressed to Theodore Palaiologos, Despot of Morea. The letter was attached in Berol. gr. 173.
- 77 On the undermining features of Lucian's dialogues, see Branham, 'Unruly Eloquence', 67–8.
- 78 *Mazaris*, 56.15–27: καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ἐξ ἐμοῦ προσαγόρευσον χαίρων χαίροντα τὸν εὐγενέστατον καὶ πάσης ἀμαθίας τε καὶ ἀμουσίας γέμοντα περιπόθητον θεῖον τοῦ θειοτάτου καὶ μεγάλου αὐτοκράτορος τὸν Ἀσᾶν· ἔπειτα μὴ ὀκνήσης εἰπεῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ τόνδε τὸν λόγον, ὥς· οὐκ ἐπελαθόμην, ῥητορικώτατ' ἀνδρῶν, τῶν σῶν χρυσέων ἐπῶν οὐδ' ἐν ἄδου· ἀλλ', ὥσπερ ἐν ταῖς βασιλικαῖς αὐλαῖς τῷ τε κρατοῦντι καὶ τοῖς ἐτέροις ἐκοίνουν ὅσαι ὦραι τὰ σὰ ζυγγράμματα, οὕτω κἂν ἄδου μέμνημαι· καὶ νύκτωρ μὲν διηγούμαι πρὸς τε τὸν μέγαν Πλούτωνα καὶ τὴν Περσεφόνην ἃ περὶ τῆς τῶν κεκοιμημένων ἀναστάσεως διεξῆλθες ἀριδηλότατα· μεθ' ἡμέραν δὲ διεξέρχομαι πρὸς τε τὸν Μίνω καὶ Αἰακῶν καὶ Ραδαμάνθιαν μεθ' ἡδονῆς ὅσους περ τὸν ἅπαντα τῆς σαυτοῦ ζωῆς χρόνον ἀκοπωτί τε καὶ ἀσολοικιστί, ἐτι γε μὴν ἀβαρβαριστί, νοός τε καὶ σαφηνείας ἄνευ, ἐννέα πρὸς τοῖς ἐξήκοντα λόγους γέγραφας. καὶ τὸ θέατρον διὰ τῆς διηγήσεως ῥητόρων καὶ φιλοσόφων νεκῶν πληρῶ, ὧν ἀκούοντων οἱ μὲν πηδῶσιν ὑφ' ἡδονῆς, οἱ δὲ γελῶσι σαρδώνιον, ἔνιοι δὲ τὸν ἀέρα πληροῦσι βοῆς [...]. δι' ἐφέσεως γὰρ ἅπαντες ἔχουσι τοῦ θεάσασθαι καὶ ἀπὸ στόματος ἀκοῦσαι τὰ σὰ ὥραια κατὰ σὲ ῥαψωδήματα; trans Smithies.
- 79 *Mazaris*, 46.27–48.9.
- 80 Garland, 'Mazaris's Journey to Hades', 204.
- 81 Marsh, *Lucian and the Latins*, 12–13, which discusses several manuscripts, among which Vat. gr. 90 (with Lucian's texts) seemed to be the most circulated.
- 82 Guarino of Verona, Giovanni Aurispa, or Erasmus.
- 83 Bozia, *Lucian and His Roman Voices*, 156–7.
- 84 The seriousness of the text's message is pointed out in the epilogue of the text when Mazaris remarks that his text was a serious endeavour rather than a play – *Mazaris*, 60.21: ταῦτα γέγραφα σπουδάζων μᾶλλον ἢ παίζων.

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16 Form and content in the dialogues of Gennadios Scholarios

*George Karamanolis**

Georgios Gennadios Scholarios (c.1400–1472) is well known among Byzantine historians for the critical role that he played in the last decades of Byzantium, most importantly as a member of the delegation of the Eastern Church to the Council of Ferrara-Florence in 1437–1439, and later as the first ecumenical patriarch under the Ottomans (appointed by Mehmet II on 6 January 1454 as Gennadios II).¹ Students of Byzantine philosophy on the other hand know Scholarios as a committed and prolific philosopher of a strong Aristotelian bent. Scholarios's commitment to Aristotelianism, which manifests itself in his numerous exegetical works of Aristotle, in his fervent defence of Aristotle against Plethon's criticisms,² and in his explicit praise of Aristotle,³ is of a kind that dovetails with his overall intellectual profile.

A browse through Scholarios's work suffices to show his unusually great debt to the scholastic tradition in general and to the interpretation of Aristotelian philosophy in particular. Scholarios exhibits a knowledge unrivalled in Byzantium of philosophers, such as Anselm, Duns Scotus, Gilbert de la Porrée, Peter of Spain and, especially, Thomas Aquinas. Indeed, he devotes over a quarter of his work to summaries, commentaries and translations of writings of Aquinas and of Peter of Spain, many of which are exegetical of Aristotle.⁴ Scholarios's alignment with scholastic Aristotelianism is in line with his more general pro-Latin sympathies, which feature prominently in his biography. For we know that Scholarios sided with the theses of the Western Church in the early period of his life and, as will also be seen below, he was an arduous advocate of the union of Eastern and Western Churches. But even when Scholarios returned to the Orthodox positions later in life, he remained an enthusiast of scholastic philosophy.⁵

Scholarios's attachment to scholastic Aristotelianism may be seen as being at odds with his composition of dialogues.⁶ The works of Scholarios's philosophical models, Aristotle and the scholastics, are not framed in dialogic form and Scholarios's own philosophical works are either expositions or various kinds of exegesis (commentaries). Such genres allow Scholarios to argue for a thesis and to confront, and often to combat, alternative views on topics such as the status of the soul, divine providence, the resurrection of the body or the interpretation of an Aristotelian treatise. The dialogic form, however, does not favour such an undertaking but rather precludes it. For in a dialogue, the author

can at best be one of its characters, and this has two main consequences: first, assuming that the author's view is undertaken by a character of the dialogue, this is a view ascribed to a certain character and only obliquely to the author; second, even when the author's view is represented by the main character of the dialogue, this is just one view voiced in the dialogue which other interlocutors debate or dispute. This critical attitude to all views taken in a dialogue is postulated by the genre of dialogue, which is essentially pluralistic and non-authoritative.

The question, then, arises why someone like Scholarios, who was well known for his personal argumentative style in both philosophy and in ecclesiastical matters, employs the dialogue form. I will argue that Scholarios uses the dialogue form in order to persuade, not to inquire, as is the case with Plato's dialogues, for instance. However, the dialogic form allows the author to carry out persuasion while avoiding personal argument. More specifically, I will argue that Scholarios resorts to dialogue because its form is such that he can use in a persuasive function but also allows him to subtly distance himself from positions such as his pro-Latinism, which he abandoned later in his career. Second, I will argue that Scholarios uses the dialogic form in order to generate consent around his views on the part of the characters of a dialogue, and this is a powerful rhetorical means to convince his reader.

The dialogues of Scholarios

Scholarios wrote two dialogues on the topic of the procession of the Holy Spirit, dated around 1446/47 and 1450/51, respectively,⁷ and a dialogue against the Jewish faith, which is dated to 1464. Moreover, he authored two substantial works in the question-and-reply format, one concerning the divinity of Christ and one against the arguments of his teacher and mentor, Marc of Ephesos (Marc Eugenikos) on the procession of the Holy Spirit. The former is one of Scholarios's last works, written in the year of his death (1470),⁸ while the latter is early, written around 1444.⁹ Both works have the form of a narrated dialogue, like Plato's *Symposium*, but the dialogic form is rather tenuous and I will not include them in my analysis. There is finally a dialogue known by the Latin title *De via salutis humanae* (περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς σωτηρίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων), which almost certainly is not a genuine work of Scholarios but rather a compilation made by someone familiar with Scholarios's thought and writings, extrapolated and distilled from Scholarios's treatise with almost the same title (περὶ τῆς μόνης ὁδοῦ τῆς σωτηρίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων), or on the basis of a summary of that treatise – the so-called *Brief Exposition of Christian Faith*, which was allegedly delivered orally to Mehmet II.¹⁰ I will return to this spurious work at the end of my paper. For the moment, I would like to point out only that the fabrication and attribution to Scholarios of an apologetic dialogue clearly indicates that he was a well-known author of that genre. In the following, I will first focus on Scholarios's two dialogues on the Holy Spirit, which, I will contend, are of a different nature from that of his later, anti-Jewish dialogue.

The two dialogues on the Holy Spirit

The first of Scholarios's dialogues on the procession of the Holy Spirit bears the title *Neophron, or Aeromythia*. Neophron is the name of one of the two interlocutors in the dialogue, the other one being Palaitimos. The names are significant, of course. The name Neophron signifies the innovator, the partisan for new doctrines, while Palaitimos is the follower of the ancient tradition. Neophron is explicitly identified with the patriarch Gregorios, the last patriarch before the fall of Constantinople, who fled to the West and joined the Western Church, while Palaitimos comes out as the composer of the dialogue, which means that he is Scholarios's spokesman.¹¹ This becomes explicit at the end of the dialogue, when Neophron identifies his interlocutor with Scholarios.¹² The doctrine that Neophron advocates throughout the dialogue is the procession of the Holy Spirit from both the Father and the Son, well known as *filioque*, while Palaitimos argues passionately instead that this doctrine is not at all justified by the patristic tradition, but rather is in opposition to it and should be considered heretical.

As noted earlier, the dialogue has also the title *aeromythia*, a strange word, occurring first here, with ambiguous meaning.¹³ The ambiguity has to do with the fact that it is not clear whether the first compound (*aero-*) specifies the subject matter of the talk/words (*mythos*) or its quality. If the former is the case, then the term must mean 'talk about lofty things', which is what the attested verb *aeromytheō* means, and in the present case such would indeed be the talk concerning the Holy Spirit. If the quality of the talk is specified, however, then the term must mean 'winged, random words', which is what the attested term *aeromythos* means, and it may refer to people's gossip about Scholarios's position on the procession of the Holy Spirit, namely whether he sides with the view of the Eastern or the Western Church.

Let us move now to the dialogue itself. The dialogue has a conventional beginning; Neophron asks Palaitimos whether he is willing to engage in a conversation about the divine (τὸ θεῖον), since both have leisure (σχολή = Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, 1.3). The term *scholē* has clear Platonic overtones, occurring often in Plato's dialogue openings.¹⁴ Platonic vocabulary abounds at this stage of the fictional conversation. Before going very far into the conversation Neophron responds to Palaitimos's plea for clarity by asking how the conversation should go on. I cite the relevant passage.

NEOPHRON: But how should we converse? For it is above all necessary to inquire about the method and define it, isn't it?

PALAITIMOS: Yes.

NEOPHRON: My view is the following. I am not going to compete with you in a tentative manner but rather my intention is to find the truth. I will set forth the true views and give an argument. And you will have to show that I do not prove my claims, either by picking up the major premise, or the minor, or both. And if you want to show that the conclusion is impossible – for you are able to devise such reductions *ad impossibilem* – then either you should object to the necessity of my arguments or you concede to them.¹⁵

Let me first focus on the question that Neophron asks about the manner in which the two interlocutors should converse. The question is ambiguous, as it is not only about the kind of discussion that will follow but also, and I would say primarily, about the literary genre employed here, namely about the kind of dialogue that should prevail. The underlying assumption apparently is that there is a variety of kinds within the dialogic genre. These include the Platonic, the Ciceronian, the Plutarchean and the Lucianic dialogic genres, but also those of Justin Martyr and of Gregory of Nyssa. Yet even within the Platonic dialogic genre, several different variants can be distinguished, as ancient critics point out. One ancient classification of Plato's dialogues divides them into two main groups, the dialogue suitable for instruction (ὀφηγητικός) and the inquiring dialogue (ζητητικός), with further classification to follow.¹⁶ Neophron indeed alludes to the plurality of dialogic forms when he rejects the peirastic kind of Platonic dialogue, which falls under the inquiring type of dialogue. Neophron justifies his rejection on the grounds that his aim in this dialogue is to establish the truth – not to challenge the views of his interlocutors as in peirastic dialogues.¹⁷ This aim, he argues, must also shape the role of the interlocutor in the dialogue in the sense that the latter should dialectically challenge either the truth of the premises of a syllogism or the validity of the conclusion. This description of the dialectic task assigned to the interlocutor is clearly informed by Aristotle's logic and dialectic that was favoured by scholastics.

What is important here, and will become clearer later on in the dialogue, is that the entire Platonic genre of dialogue is rejected as a model, not just the peirastic kind. While in the passage quoted above, it is Neophron who implicitly rejects the model of the Platonic dialogue, later on Palaitimos makes this explicit while rejecting also the Lucianic form of dialogue. Below I cite the relevant passage:

NEOPHRON: But the 'now then, he said' and such phrases, I do not know how it will be fitting to say this here. But it is like we force ourselves to give a Platonic flair to our conversation. For it is not at all necessary that our conversation be vulgar and drawn out.

PALAITIMOS: By no means! That should be absent.

NEOPHRON: But would it meet with your approval to polish everything toward the Lucianic dialogue?

PALAITIMOS: Away with that! For considerable lack of elegance comes to mind when thinking of him, although at places he is fine.

NEOPHRON: And how will someone praise this dialogue if not able to either associate it with Plato or refer it to Lucian? For it will be necessary to note down its features, and then many will copy it.

PALAITIMOS: Is there actually such a need to follow the ancients in all cases? I would suggest that there is also need to innovate . . . For I, not you, will go beyond the form of those dialogues and I will make my replies longer and thus also most true . . .¹⁸

It is remarkable that here Scholarios does not hesitate to openly dismiss ancient models of dialogue and argue instead in favour of an innovating style. This is remarkable because Scholarios's spokesman, Palaitimos, comes out as someone loyal to the ancient tradition, as his name already suggests, but this loyalty apparently concerns only the content, not the form and the aim, of the dialogue. More precisely, Scholarios suggests that his aim to demonstrate the truth by showing loyalty to the Christian patristic tradition leads him to sacrifice loyalty to traditional, ancient forms of dialogue. Those forms of dialogue are not considered fitting for the present purposes, because they do not allow long speeches that strongly vindicate a specific view on the question of the procession of the Holy Spirit, which for Scholarios identifies with the position of the Eastern Church and he considers as true. The final step in this strategy is that the alleged truth outlined by Palaitimos will be explicitly credited to Scholarios at the end of the dialogue. Such a plan could not be carried out if the Platonic or Lucianic form of dialogue was assumed.

If we now look at the substance of the dialogue between the two interlocutors, we will not find a real battle of arguments with the aim of establishing the truth, as was repeatedly professed.¹⁹ The dialogue does not contain dialectical refutations of the kind required by Neophron in the passage cited above,²⁰ but rather abounds in eristic turns and polemical retorts. Neophron's main claim is that the opponents of the view that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son are followers of the ancient heresy of Nestorius, who denied the full divine nature of Christ and, by implication, he continues, they also denied Christ's causal role in the procession of the Holy Spirit. This is the challenge that Palaitimos sets out to counter by arguing that nothing in the patristic tradition justifies the view of the Western Church that Neophron embraces, according to which the Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father and the Son.

There is, however, another issue discussed along with the procession of the Holy Spirit, namely whether the Byzantines should decline church union or not. The answer that Palaitimos gives on that is that they do favour the union but not at any cost, especially not at the cost of sacrificing the theological, doctrinal truth of their Church. Palaitimos is given twice as much space to present his views on the matter. In the last section of the dialogue, Neophron intervenes very briefly and only to challenge Palaitimos, while the latter goes on to reply at length and elaborate on his previous remarks. The dialogue ends with a personal, almost apologetic, tone. Palaitimos, now revealing himself as Scholarios, openly claims that his reputation remained undamaged before the eyes of the prudent and he does not regret the loss of offices.²¹

The aim of the dialogue is clear. Scholarios sets out to offer an apology to the effect that he fully subscribes to the anti-unionist party and that he is fully committed to orthodoxy, and he opts for a dialogic form that can accommodate that apology and be most persuasive. We need to remember here that Scholarios changed his views on church union and on the procession of the Holy Spirit. He strongly favoured church union until 1444 and, on that matter, he

disagreed with his teacher, Mark Eugenikos, bishop of Ephesos.²² The disagreement must have caused some tension on the relations between Scholarios and Mark and some frictions with the imperial court too, since Scholarios had been appointed a member of the delegation of the Eastern Church to the Council of Ferrara-Florence in 1437–1439 by the emperor John VIII Palaiologos. In a number of texts, Scholarios argues openly in favour of church union, and he does this while defending the positions of the Western Church in general and on the procession of the Holy Spirit in particular.²³ Scholarios does this most clearly in his work *That There Must Be a Union of Dogma and not a Peace of Expediency*, in the so-called *Abhortatio* or *Paraklēsis*,²⁴ and in his *Anaphora* or *Plea*, which addresses the emperor.²⁵ Besides, as I have already mentioned, Scholarios wrote a work in question-and-answer format that engages with the positions of Mark Eugenikos and sets out to refute them, arguing to the effect that the doctrine of the Western Church regarding the procession of the Holy Spirit is theologically justified.²⁶ In all these works, Scholarios urges the conclusion of a dogmatic union based on dogmatic agreement, not merely on expediency.

After the year 1444, however, and more actively after 1450, Scholarios gradually changed his mind on the procession of the Holy Spirit and on church union and aligned his position with that of the mainstream of the Eastern Church.²⁷ The first dialogue on the procession of the Holy Spirit was published in 1446 or 1447, that is, about a year or two after Scholarios had published his most extensive work against church union, namely the *First Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*,²⁸ and perhaps less than a year after he had published a *Second Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*.²⁹ Both works address the emperors. In the prologue of the *First Treatise*, Scholarios claims that his work was based on fifteen lectures he gave in the palace in front of the emperor John VIII, the pope's ambassador, Patriarch Gregorios and many cardinals, while the *Second Treatise* directly addresses the emperor John of Trebizond.³⁰ Scholarios also wrote a declaration on the same matter about a year before the composition of the first dialogue on the Holy Spirit with another, similar, declaration to follow two years after that dialogue (i.e. in 1449),³¹ while he also wrote a *Brief Apology on the part of the Antiunionists* around the same time.³²

Clearly, the two dialogues on the procession of the Holy Spirit make part of Scholarios's project of dispelling the charge of unionism. This project involves the composition of different kinds of apology to the effect that he fully subscribes to the anti-unionist party in Byzantium and that he is fully aligned with the canonical views of his teacher Marc Eugenikos. The dialogues are one such form of apology.³³ The question, however, remains why Scholarios does not stick with the composition of treatises, declarations and apologetic works, but also writes dialogues.

The reason in my view is that the dialogue can serve in a way that a declaration or a treatise does not. First, the dialogic form allows its author to extend its readership to an ordinary person, who was probably sharing the widespread (and

well-justified) belief that Scholarios had sided with the pro-unionist party. No other literary form can have so wide an intended readership. Second, the dialogic form allows the author to imply that he had never favoured such a pro-unionist approach. This is crucial. In his anti-unionist declarations, Scholarios had to acknowledge and even to admit the accusation of his commitment to the pro-unionist party. This is inherent in the speech act of an apologetically intended declaration. The dialogue on the other hand addresses the point of Scholarios's alleged pro-unionism without acknowledging it, let alone implying his endorsement of it at some period of his life. The dialogue actually creates the impression that the opposed view had never been endorsed. This may well be the reason why Scholarios wrote yet another dialogue of the same kind five years after the first one, around 1450/51.

This second dialogue on the procession of the Holy Spirit is longer and more sophisticated than the first. There are three interlocutors, two with Latin names, Benedict and Olbianos, and one with Greek, Eulogios. The Latin characters represent the Western Church, advocate its theological views on the procession of the Holy Spirit and challenge Eulogios, Scholarios's spokesman. It is noticeable that the names Olbianos and Eulogios mean 'blessed' in Latin and Greek respectively. The two names may suggest that Scholarios has two profiles, a pro-Latin used in the past, and a current, pro-Orthodox, one. This idea receives some confirmation from the dialogue itself. Olbianos starts the dialogue by challenging Eulogios to consider the position of Duns Scotus and Aquinas on the procession of the Holy Spirit and how they compare with the relevant view of the Eastern Church that Eulogios endorses.³⁴ This is a consideration that fits with Scholarios's thinking. Olbianos actually refers to a fictional debate that Eulogios had with a friend of his, in which the former was explaining that these Latin philosophers disagree on the procession of the Holy Spirit.

This is an intriguing starting point. Unlike the first dialogue, this one begins with a point that does not have to do with a mere past event, such as Scholarios's pro-unionism, but with Scholarios's actual viewpoint, his lifelong sympathy with the scholastic school of thought. Scholarios's spokesman, Eulogios, denies that the position of Duns Scotus and Aquinas on the procession of the Holy Spirit inclines him towards the doctrine of the Western Church, but he refrains from entering into details. Somewhat surprised with this answer, Benedict retorts that Eulogios used to be a declared pro-unionist, and the implicit challenge is how he now squares his view on the procession of the Holy Spirit with his pro-unionism. Eulogios replies that he does not deny his pro-unionism; what he denies, he says, is that he favoured a unionist stance at the cost of sacrificing the doctrine of the Eastern Church. We have encountered this point already in the first dialogue. The rest of the dialogue addresses the pro-unionist charge against Scholarios. Noticeable in this connection are the many references to the Council of Florence-Ferrara, which are absent in the first dialogue.³⁵ The critical point that is now made and is subsequently countered is that Scholarios's current pro-unionist position contradicts the official position of that Council.

In the second dialogue, the charges of Scholarios's pro-unionism and pro-Latin sympathy are interrelated. Scholarios's ecclesiastical and philosophical positions are now presented as making up a unity and are subjected to criticism jointly. By the same token, the apology that follows is more systematic and more pointed than in the first dialogue. Scholarios sets out to show, as in his first dialogue, that the patristic tradition on the Holy Spirit is unanimously in favour of the position of the Eastern Church (*Second Dialogue*, OC 3:33.19–20), but now he elaborates more. In this sense, and in many others as will be seen below, the second dialogue builds on the first one. Scholarios now addresses the criticism that the tradition of the Eastern Church is not as uniform as was assumed and he was claiming in the first dialogue, and the example of Nikolaos Kabasilas is mentioned in this context.³⁶ Scholarios implicitly admits that the Eastern Church was not characterised by uniformity on this front, but the division, he suggests, is between orthodoxy and heresy. For he targets those arguing in favour of two sources of the procession of the Holy Spirit, arguing that they come close to Sabellianism, an early Christian doctrine condemned as heresy (a form of monarchianism), according to which Father and Son are not two distinct hypostases of the same principle, God, but rather God is both Father and Son, that is, God is two principles in one (*Second Dialogue*, OC 3:25.14–15).³⁷ Scholarios's point is that those who argue in favour of two sources of the procession of the Holy Spirit fail to distinguish properly between Father and Son.

How does this second dialogue enlighten us about the use of dialogue by Scholarios in order to address the charges levelled against him of pro-unionism and pro-Latin sympathies? The evidence of the second dialogue indicates that there are two key features that recommend Scholarios's use of dialogic form on the whole. As I pointed out earlier, the dialogic genre allows the author to take distance from accusations levelled against him that are discussed in dialogue; these are now addressed without being even acknowledged as accusations. This is an important difference from other forms of apology, such as declarations or letters, where criticisms need to be stated and even admitted. In the second dialogue, however, we witness yet another interesting move that is facilitated by the dialogic genre. At an advanced point of the dialogue, one of the Latin interlocutors claims that his opponent, Eulogios, is so convincing in his anti-unionist argument that a suspicion of pro-unionism would be completely unjustified in his case.³⁸ Now Scholarios has the representatives of the Western Church discrediting the accusation of his pro-unionism rather than his spokesman, as is the case in the core of the dialogue.

This is a specific stylistic device that differentiates the second dialogue from the first, where Scholarios steps in personally at the end of the dialogue in order to persuade the reader. In the second dialogue, Scholarios employs an implied reader to discharge him of pro-unionism. The implied reader is not a kind of reader but a structure of the text and a dialectical tool that suggests to the reader how the text should be understood and interpreted. In the case of Scholarios's second dialogue, such a textual structure is the fictional, Latin, interlocutors who are presented as fully convinced of his anti-unionism. This dialectical tool reminds us

that Scholarios wrote the dialogue with a certain readership in mind and in order to persuade, not to inquire, as is the case with Platonic dialogues, for instance, and it is used precisely in order to enhance the persuasive function of the dialogue.³⁹

From what we have seen so far, it emerges that Scholarios uses the dialogue as a means of formulating a sophisticated and effective apology. It is sophisticated because he can put forward a series of arguments against the charge of pro-unionism without admitting it, and effective because he could construct an implied reader appearing convinced by his apology. This is an ingenious use of dialogue. Scholarios employs it as an instrument of refutation, an *elenchos*, by means of which he sets out to discredit the charges levelled against him and guide the reader to certain conclusions by having an implied reader endorsing them. Such a dialogue is, of course, the opposite of an open-ended one, as is the case with Platonic dialogues, in which the aim to inquire and find the truth can end without final results. It makes now better sense why Scholarios rejects the Platonic kind of dialogue. Scholarios rejects the openness of the Platonic dialogue; his dialogues leave no room besides the articulation and defence of his anti-unionist thesis, which is a kind of personal self-defence or apology for his earlier pro-unionism.

The dialogue against the Jews

The case is similar with Scholarios's dialogue concerning the Jewish religion.⁴⁰ Yet this dialogue is of a somewhat different nature than the two dialogues on the procession of the Holy Spirit discussed above. The dialogue was composed in 1464, when Scholarios comes back to office in the patriarchate, and was written in Istanbul by his own admission. At the same time, Scholarios wrote another short work of anti-Jewish tenor that discussed the messianic prophecies that the Jews consider unfulfilled.⁴¹ The question here is why on earth Scholarios wanted to write a dialogue on such a topic. Of course, there were Jews in Istanbul at the time, but this is only a necessary not a sufficient condition. The question is what aim would the writing of such a dialogue serve.

The answer, I think, emerges in the dialogue itself, if read carefully. The dialogue is framed to show the falsity of Judaism. The interlocutors are a Jew and a Christian. At the end of the dialogue, the Jew admits defeat, being convinced by the Christian interlocutor, in a way reminiscent of Justin's dialogue with Tryphon the Jew, presumably the archetypical dialogue between Jew and Christian. Below I cite how the Jew, near the end of the dialogue, concludes by admitting the superiority of the Christian arguments:

In the past I often encountered Christians who tried to discredit the Jewish faith on the basis of Jewish prophecies, against which the Jews devised many replies, as I thought at least earlier, but now your methods have shown to me that these were rather ways to escape. The path that your arguments take is the shortest possible and peculiar and brings someone directly to the knowledge of truth, so that it cannot only convince the Jews but also anyone else with different faith. And you are not only capable of convincing a person of

different faith but also to show to everyone the reasonableness of your faith not only regarding the difference between Jews and Christians but also about every single healthy and sound view that pertains to God.⁴²

Why did Scholarios write such a dialogue? What motivated him to write a dialogue about the Jews at that point in his life and career? This is not clear. There is nothing in his biography or in contemporary history, as far as I can see, to justify such an enterprise. Of course, works against the Jews, and especially dialogues, can be found in almost all periods of Byzantine history.⁴³ But the existence of a literary genre cannot explain the composition of a work of that genre. What is the reason, then?

My tentative answer is that through the dialogue against the Jews Scholarios addresses the issue of the Muslim religion, which was of course pressing at the time. This is supported by the following considerations. First, the main issue discussed in the dialogue is whether Jesus was only a prophet or God.⁴⁴ This brings to mind the prophet of the Muslim religion, Muhammad. Second, the main argument of the dialogue, repeated frequently in strong terms, is that there is only one true faith, the Christian, which is convincing enough to receive assent by anyone.⁴⁵ The dialogue concludes with the Jewish interlocutor saying at the end of his speech cited above that the argument of the Christian would be powerful enough to convince the person of any faith other than the Christian one. This suggests that the implicit target is not only the Jews. Finally, at a certain point, the Christian interlocutor claims that there are two dominant religions on earth, but he names just one, the Christian, while the second is not named.⁴⁶ This can be construed as evidence that the Muslim religion is targeted under the cover of Judaism. This becomes even more plausible if we think that the readership of the dialogue must have included Christians who lived among Muslims and were easily reminded of the latter.

But the question, then, is why Scholarios did not write a work addressing the Muslim religion openly. We have actually three works of that kind from Scholarios, an exposition of faith, a set of questions and answers, and another, mentioned earlier, with the peculiar title *The Path to Salvation* (*Περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ πρὸς τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων*, known by the Latin title *De via salutis humanae*). As I have already noted, the latter is almost certainly a forgery.⁴⁷ It is inspired by Scholarios's work *Περὶ τῆς μόνης ὁδοῦ πρὸς τὴν σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων* but exhibits conspicuous similarities with a pseudo-Athanasian work *Questions and Answers*, with the difference, though, that the forgery is pro-unionist in tone. Presumably someone wrote that work intending to justify Scholarios's pro-unionism. Scholarios's *Questions and Answers*, on the other hand, is a work characterised by a mild tone against the Muslims. This gives us a hint. Scholarios did not want to argue explicitly and agonistically against a fictive Muslim interlocutor, as he did with the Latin ones in his dialogues on the Holy Spirit, or with the Jew in his dialogue against the Jewish faith, because this would generate tension in his relations with the sultan and the Muslim-dominated environment of the time. If I am right in my conclusion, Scholarios's dialogue against the Jews is remarkable for

his use of the implied reader, in that it creates a broad horizon of reception and interpretation to his readership.

Conclusion

The picture that emerges from the above concerning Scholarios's use of dialogue is a complex one. It is important to remember that this is not Scholarios's favourite literary form. His other works are philosophical commentaries, expositions, letters and declarations. However, Scholarios opts for the dialogic form because this serves him best in order to persuade a wide readership, and, as he himself acknowledges, he shapes the dialogue in a way that fits his purposes. These are mainly of two kinds, apologetic and polemical; Scholarios's dialogues on the procession of the Holy Spirit are apologetic, while his dialogue against the Jews has a tacit polemical aim. The dialogic form allows Scholarios to devise an efficient way of framing both apology and polemic. In the former case, the dialogue hosts an apology without admitting the accusation of pro-unionism, in which the implied reader is portrayed as convinced. In the case of the dialogue against the Jews, on the other hand, Scholarios uses the dialogic form in order to mask his polemic against the Muslims. In all cases, however, Scholarios uses the dialogue in a persuasive function, not an inquiring one. This is a well-known use of dialogue in Byzantium.⁴⁸ It attests, though, to Scholarios's diligence. He had apparently appreciated that success in persuasion is determined by literary form.

Notes

* This paper has benefited greatly from comments of the audience at the conference on dialogues and debates in Oxford in July 2014 and from a variety of suggestions and remarks of Averil Cameron, Chris Deliso, Niels Gaul, Vasileios Syros and Marie-Hélène Blanchet. I alone remain responsible for its shortcomings. All translations are mine.

1 See Turner, 'George Gennadius Scholarios and the Union of Florence'; idem, 'Career of George Gennadius Scholarios'. Scholarios's life and chronology have been studied afresh recently by Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*. The study of Zisis, *Γεννάδιος Β' Σχολάριος*, is obsolete and in many regards unreliable – see Podskalsky, Review of Zisis' *Γεννάδιος Β' Σχολάριος*.

2 I refer to Scholarios's work *Against the Difficulties Raised by Plethon Concerning Aristotle* (κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει). I use the standard edition of Scholarios's works of Petit, Sidéridès, Jugie. Scholarios's work against Plethon is published in *Oeuvres complètes*, 4:1–116. In the course of their polemics, Scholarios published more documents against Pletho (in *OC* 4:116–89).

3 See *OC* 8:505–7. Scholarios puts Aristotle and the Bible on the same footing. He explains Jesus's humanity, for instance, as an *eidos* abstracted from matter, according to Aristotle and the sacred tradition (κατὰ γε Ἀριστοτέλην καὶ τὴν ἱερὰν ἀλήθειαν = *On the Humanity of Jesus*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:390.19).

4 Scholarios claims to have read most of Aquinas's philosophical and theological works (ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 5:2.2–6) and he explains the reasons for his attention to Aquinas in the preface to his commentary on Aquinas's *De ente et essentia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 6:179.25–180.24, which is dedicated to his student Matthaïos Kamariotes. I owe the references to Turner, 'Career of George Gennadius Scholarios', 427. On Scholarios's Thomism, see Podskalsky, 'Rezeption'; idem, *Theologie*

- und Philosophie, 222–6; Tavardon, ‘Georges Scholarios’, and, more recently, Plested, *Orthodox Readings of Aquinas*, 127–34.
- 5 See Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 259–352, and below.
- 6 As far as I know, there is no systematic study of Scholarios’s dialogues. I profited much from Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, especially regarding Scholarios’s stance on church union.
- 7 Their precise date is controversial. Jugie, *OC* 3:viii–x dates them in 1446 and 1451 respectively, while Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 484–5 in 1447 and 1449/50. Quite importantly, both dialogues are written after the composition of the first and second treatise on the procession of the Holy Spirit (in 1445/46). See also below.
- 8 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:458–75.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 3:476–538. On its date, see Jugie, *OC* 3:xlvi–xlix.
- 10 *On the Only Path to Salvation* (περί τῆς μόνης ὁδοῦ τῆς σωτηρίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων), ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:434–52; *Brief Exposition of the Christian Faith*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:453–8. See the introductory remarks of Jugie in *OC* 3 xxxi–xxxv, who argues against the authenticity of the dialogue περί τῆς ὁδοῦ τῆς σωτηρίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων, followed by Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 41–3. Their arguments rest on the fact that the dialogue shows remarkable affinities with a text attributed to Athanasius with the title ἑτεραί τινες ἀποκρίσεις – but probably this is also forged in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries (edited in *PG* 28:773–96) – and on the fact that it defends the position of the Western Church on the procession of the Holy Spirit, which Scholarios abandoned in his maturity. The fabricator of the dialogue may well be its scribe, George Hermonymus.
- 11 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:1: τὰ πρόσωπα. Νεόφρων καὶ Παλαίτιμος. Νεόφρων ἐστὶν ὁ πατριάρχης κύρ Γρηγόριος, Παλαίτιμος δὲ ὁ ποιητὴς τοῦ διαλόγου; ‘The characters of the dialogue, Neophron and Palaitimos. Neophron is the patriarch Gregorios, while Palaitimos the author of the dialogue’.
- 12 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:21.28–30: ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· εἴτ’ ἐλάνθανές με τοσοῦτον χρόνον Σχολάριος ὢν; ἔδει γοῦν σε λανθάνειν. οὐ γὰρ εἶ σκεκρητάριος, οὐδὲ δικαστής, οὐδὲ τὰ ἱερὰ ἐκεῖνα ἐπ’ ἐκκλησίας διδάσκεις δόγματα, ἐπεὶ ἐγὼ σε ταῦτα ἀφειλόμην; ‘NEOPHRON Have I, then, for so long failed to recognize that you are Scholarios? You were indeed bound to be unrecognizable. Since you are neither secretary nor judge, nor do you preach sermons in church as you did, for I have taken these privileges from you’.
- 13 The term is an *hapax*, not listed in the standard dictionaries, LSJ, Lampe, or Sophocles, yet the terms ἀερομυθέω, ἀερόμυθος do occur (see LSJ s.v.). The participle ἀερομυθοῦντες is used in the first sense mentioned above in Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, 11.21, namely “talking about lofty things”.
- 14 *Phaedrus* 227b, 229e; cf. *Protagoras* 314d, *Phaedo* 66d, *Timaeus* 18b.
- 15 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:3.32–4.4:

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· . . . ἀλλὰ πῶς ἂν καὶ διαλεχθείημεν; δεῖ γὰρ ἐπὶ πάντων περὶ τοῦ τρόπου πρῶτον ζητεῖν καὶ τοῦτον ὀρίζειν. ἦ γάρ;

ΠΑΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· Ναί.

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· ἐμοὶ μὲν τοίνυν οὕτω δοκεῖ. οὐ κατὰ τοὺς πειραστικούς διαγωνιοῦμαι σοι, ἀλλ’ ἡ πρόθεσις ἀληθεύοντος ἔσται. ὅθεν προθήσομαι τε τάληθῃ καὶ λόγον ἐπάξω. σὺ δὲ ἔχεις ἐλέγχειν με μὴ ἀποδεικνύντα, ἢ τῆς μείζονος λαβόμενος, ἢ τῆς ἐλάττονος τῶν προτάσεων, ἢ καὶ ἄμφοιν. εἰ δὲ βούλει καὶ εἰς ἀδύνατον ἀπάγειν τοῦ συμπεράσματος—ἐστὲ γὰρ δεινοὶ καὶ ὑμεῖς περὶ τὰς τοιαύτας ἀπαγωγάς—οὕτω πρὸς τὴν δοκοῦσαν τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων ἀνάγκην ἐνίστασο, ἢ συγχώρει.

- 16 See Albinus, *Isagogē*, chap. 3 and Diogenes Laertius III, 49–51.

- 17 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:3.36–7: οὐ κατὰ τοὺς πειραστικούς διαγωνιοῦμαι σοι, ἀλλ’ ἡ πρόθεσις ἀληθεύοντος ἔσται.

18 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:11.23–12.8:

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· ἀλλὰ τὸ φέρε ἢ δ' ὅς, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦδε, οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως ἐνταῦθα λέγειν ἀρμόσει. ἀλλ' ὥς οἶόν τε βιασόμεθα, ὥς ἂν τι τῆς πλατωνικῆς εὐχροίας δώμεν τῷ λόγῳ. οὐ γὰρ δεῖ παντάπασιν τὸν γε ἡμέτερον λόγον χυδαῖον εἶναι καὶ κατασεσυρμένον.

ΠΑΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· μηδαμῶς. ἀπέστω καὶ ταῦτα.

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· ἀλλ' ἀρέσκει σοι πρὸς τοὺς Λουκιανοὺς διαλόγους ἅπαντα ἀπεξέσθαι ἄν;

ΠΑΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· χαίρετώ. πολὺ τι γὰρ κάκεινῳ τῆς τοιαύτης ἀπειροκαλίας ἐγκαταμένηται, καίτοι γε ἔστιν οὐ σωφρονοῦντι.

ΝΕΟΦΡΩΝ· καὶ πῶς τις λοιπὸν ἐπαινέσεται τὸν διάλογον τουτονί, μήτε Πλάτωνι προστιθέναι, μήτ' εἰς Λουκιανὸν ἀναφέρειν δυνάμενος; δεήσει γὰρ ταῦτα καὶ ἀποσημειοῦσθαι, ποῦ, εἴτα ἐκγράψονταί γε πολλοί.

ΠΑΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· οὕτως ἀνάγκη πανταχοῦ τοῖς ἀρχαίοις ἀκολουθεῖν; ἢ δεῖ ποῦ καὶ νεωτερίζειν. [. . .] ἐγὼ γάρ, οὐ σὺ, τὸ τῶν διαλόγων ἐκείνων ὑπερβήσομαι σχῆμα, διὰ μακροτέρων τὰς ἀποκρίσεις ποιούμενος, καὶ οὕτως ἀληθεστάτων [. . .].

19 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:3.36–7, 12.8.

20 Cf. n. 15.

21 Scholarios, *Neophron, or Aeromythia*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:21.31–6:

ΠΑΛΑΙΤΙΜΟΣ· ἀφείλου μὲν οὐδὲν τῶν γε ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐμῶν. εἰ δ' ἐκεῖνα λέγεις τὰ λειτουργήματα, τὴν πατρίδα μᾶλλον τῆς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐστέρησας ὠφελείας. ἐγὼ δὲ λαμπρότερος ἄνευ ἐκείνων τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσι δοκῶ. οὐ τοίνυν διὰ τὸ μὴ περικεῖσθαι τὸν ἐκ τῶν λειτουργιῶν ἐκείνων τύπον, ἀλλ' ἡέρα ἐσάμενος ἐλελήθειν σε. οὐδὲν δὲ θαυμαστόν, ὅτι καὶ τοῦτ' ὁ σύμπαν ἦν ἀερομυθία; Χαῖρε; 'PALAITIMOS You have not taken away anything that was not truly mine. But if you are referring to my offices, you have rather deprived our country of the benefit of them, while my reputation is only enhanced in the eyes of the prudent. This has escaped you because I have not been clothed by the vanity of these offices but by air only. It is no wonder that this entire talk was about nothing. Farewell'.

22 See Jugie, 'L'Unionisme de Georges Scholarios', and more thoroughly Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 281–322.

23 There has been a controversy as to which of these texts are genuinely authored by Scholarios. Zisis, *Γεννάδιος Β Σχολάριος*, disputes the authenticity of most of them, but he is driven by the ideological motive to defend Scholarios's orthodoxy. For a balanced view, see Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 333–44.

24 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 1:372–4; on this work, see Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 330–45.

25 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 1:296–306, under the title *Appeal for Help for the Fatherland*.

26 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:476–538.

27 The stages of this change are well described by Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 353–66.

28 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 2:1–268. The work is dated in 1445.

29 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 2:269–457, dated between 1445 (Jugie) and 1446 (Blanchet).

30 Scholarios, *First Treatise on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 2:1.2–2.6.

31 I refer to Scholarios's *Report of the Antiunionists*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:188–93, dated by Blanchet to 1445, and Scholarios's *Letter to Demetrios Palaiologos against the Council of Florence*, OC 3:117–36, dated to 1449.

32 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:77–100, dated around 1449/50.

33 The terms ἀπολογία, ὁμολογία are noticeable; cf., e.g. *Second Dialogue on the Procession of the Holy Spirit*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:34.27, 34.29, 34.31, 38.3, 39.30.

ΟΛΒΙΑΝΟΣ· ἀλλὰ καιρός ἐστιν ἐπισκέψασθαι, ὃ Εὐλόγιε, εἰ βούλει, τὰ τοῖς Λατίνων διδασκάλοις τοῖς νεωτέροις περὶ τῆς τοῦ ἁγίου Πνεύματος ἐκπορεύσεως ἠπορημένα, τοῖς τε ἄλλοις καὶ τῷ Θωμᾷ καὶ τῷ Σκότῳ. Πάνυ γὰρ ἦσθην διεξεληλυθότος σου χθὲς πρὸς τὸν φίλον, ὅπως οὐδ' ἑαυτοῖς εἰσι σύμφωνοι, ὡς ἔοικε, διὰ τὸ προσθήκην μὴ ἐπ' ἀσφαλοῦς βεβηκέναι. [. . .]

ΕΥΛΟΓΙΟΣ· κακεῖνα μὲν ἐπισκεψόμεθα αὐτίκα, εἴπερ μηδεὶς ἡμῖν ἐπελθὼν ἐνοχλήσειεν. ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνο περὶ τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος μηκέτι λέγε, ὅτι δι' Υἱοῦ ἐκπορεύεται. οὔτε γὰρ εἶπε τις οὕτως, οὔτ' ἀληθές ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐκ Πατρὸς δι' Υἱοῦ. . .

ΒΕΝΕΔΙΚΤΟΣ· ἀλλὰ καὶ σύ ποτε ἐνοῦσθαι αὐτοῖς συνεβούλευες.

ΕΥΛΟΓΙΟΣ· τοῦτό γε οὐκ ἄρνούμαι. οὐ γὰρ ἐμεμήνειν, ὥστε μὴ τὴν μετ' αὐτῶν ποθεῖν ἔνωσιν. Ἐνοῦσθαι μέντοι γε εὐπρεπῶς καὶ μετὰ τῆς ἀληθείας. Φορτικὰς δὲ οὕτω τὰς τῆς εἰρήνης ποιεῖσθαι συνθήκας οὔτ' αὐτός ποτε διανοοῦμην, οὔτ' ἄλλους τολμήσειν ἥλπιζον; 'ΟΛΒΙΑΝΟΣ It is time, Eulogios, to examine the disputed doctrines about the procession of the Holy Spirit of the more recent Latin teachers, including among others Thomas and Duns Scotus.

EULOGIOS We will immediately examine these matters, if no one comes to disturb us. But do not say that about the Holy Spirit, namely that it proceeds from the Son. Nobody said that, nor is it true, but only that it proceeds from the Father through the Son.

BENEDIKTOS But you were advising them to unite with them.

EULOGIOS I do not deny that. I was not that mad not to desire the union with them. But I wanted that we unite in a proper way and with the truth. I did not mean to make the conditions of peace difficult nor did I hope that others would dare to'.

35 Scholarios, *Second Dialogue*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:26.20–28, 30.13–28.

36 See Scholarios's *Second Dialogue*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:40.11–14, 44.12–45.30. Kasilas (born c.1320) was defending church union in the sense that the church is Christ's body. See Blanchet, *Georges-Gennadios Scholarios*, 261 with further bibliographical references.

37 Sabellius was active in early third century; see, briefly, May, 'Sabellius'. Scholarios invokes in this connection the testimony of two important representatives of the Orthodox tradition, Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus (*Second Dialogue*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:27.28–31).

38 Scholarios, *Second Dialogue*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:38.3–7: ΒΕΝΕΔΙΚΤΟΣ· γενναϊότατα ἀποελέγχεσθαι, καίτοι οὐ προὔργου τοῦτ' ἐνστησάμενος. φημί δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἀδικεῖν, εἴ τις σοὶ ἐγκαλοίη, κατέχοντι ἀσφαλῶς ὃ τί ποτε οἶει ἀληθές εἶναι. τὸ δ' ὑπονοεῖν σέ τινας, ὡς δὴ ἀνθρωπίνου τινὸς ἔνεκα λογισμοῦ τῇ ἐνώσει τῇ μέθ' ἡμῶν προσιστάμενον, καὶ τοῦτ' ἀνθρώπων ἂν εἴη τοῖς φανεροῖς μαχομένῳ; 'You defended yourself very bravely, although I did not put forth my objection for that purpose. But I would admit that anyone who would accuse you on the assumption that he knows well what he thinks is true, would do injustice to you. The suspicion that some have of you that you favored the union with us for some reason, would be characteristic of people who go against the obvious'.

39 On the notion of the implied reader, see Iser, *Akt des Lesens*, 50–67.

40 Scholarios, *Refutation of Jewish Error*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:251–304. The title is ἔλεγχος τῆς Ἰουδαϊκῆς πλάνης ἐκ τῆς Γραφῆς καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὴν χριστιανικὴν ἀλήθειαν παραθέσεως: ἐν σχήματι διαλόγου.

41 Ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:305–14.

42 Scholarios, *Refutation of Jewish Error*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:304.16–21: καὶ πολλοῖς μὲν ἐνέτυχον ἐγὼ χριστιανοῖς πρότερον ἐκ τῶν ἰουδαϊκῶν προφητειῶν πειρωμένοις τὸ ἰουδαϊκὸν καθαιρεῖν φρόνημα, πρὸς ἃ πολλὰς Ἰουδαῖοι μεμελετήκασιν

ἀποκρίσεις μὲν, ὡς ἐνόμιζον ἐγὼ πρότερον, ὡς δὲ νῦν ἐκ τῶν σῶν συνειδὼν μεθόδων, ἀποφυγὰς μᾶλλον οὐσας. ἀλλ' ἢ τῶν σῶν λόγων ὁδὸς συντομωτάτη τε καὶ ξενίζουσα καὶ πρὸς τὴν γνῶσιν τῆς ἀληθείας οὕτως ἀντίκρυς ἄγουσα, ὥστε μὴ μόνον Ἰουδαίους πείσαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντα ἑτεροδοξοῦντα, καὶ οὐ μόνον πείσαι ἑτεροδοξοῦντα, ἀλλὰ καὶ οἰκεῖον στηρίζαι τῆς πίστεως, οὐδὲ περὶ μόνης τῆς Ἰουδαίων διαφορᾶς πρὸς χριστιανούς, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάσης ἀπλῶς τῆς περὶ Θεοῦ σοφῆς τε καὶ ὑγιοῦς δόξης ἐν ᾧ πασι.

- 43 On this topic, see Külzer, *Disputationes Graecae contra Iudaeos*, and Morlet, Munnich, Pouderon, *Les dialogues Adversus Iudaeos*.
- 44 Scholarios, *Refutation of Jewish Error*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:259.33–260.13, 261.9–11.
- 45 Scholarios, *Refutation of Jewish Error*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:265.5–12, 267.15–18, 297.4–8, 300.9–13.
- 46 Scholarios, *Refutation of Jewish Error*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:276.5–16.
- 47 The phrase ὁδὸς τῆς σωτηρίας occurs several times in Scholarios's dialogue against the Jews, e.g. Scholarios, *Refutation of Jewish Error*, ed. Jugie, Petit and Sidéridès, 3:261.19, 282.34.
- 48 See *LexMA* s.v. 'Dialog'; Ieraci Bio, 'Dialogo nella letteratura bizantina' and, more recently, Averil Cameron, *Dialoguing in Late Antiquity*. Particularly interesting is the anti-Latin dialogue of Theodore Agallianos between a monk and Latin interlocutors dated at 1442, that is, contemporary with Scholarios's anti-Latin dialogues. On this dialogue, see now Blanchet, *Théodore Agallianos*.

Source

Gennadios Scholarios: *Oeuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios*, edited by Martin Jugie, Louis Petit and Xénophon A. Sidéridès. 6 vols. Paris: Maison de la Bonne Presse, 1930.

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